THE TAPESTRY BOOK

BY HELEN CHURCHILL CANDEE

WITH FOUR PLATES IN FULL COLOR AND NINETY NINE IN BLACK AND WHITE

THE TAPESTRY BOOK

BY *Helen Churchill Candee*

THIS book traces the complete history of tapestry from the modest beginnings in classic times through the glorious period of the Renaissance down to our own time. The methods used by the makers in early days and the skillful designing and weaving of the great masters are described in detail. The great periods of the Gobelins and Beauvais schools are given particular attention. For the better identification of the famous makers the tapestry marks are dealt with in a separate chapter.

While the book represents a thorough and expert study of the subject, the more than hundred illustrations render it interesting for the layman as well as for the student of industrial art.

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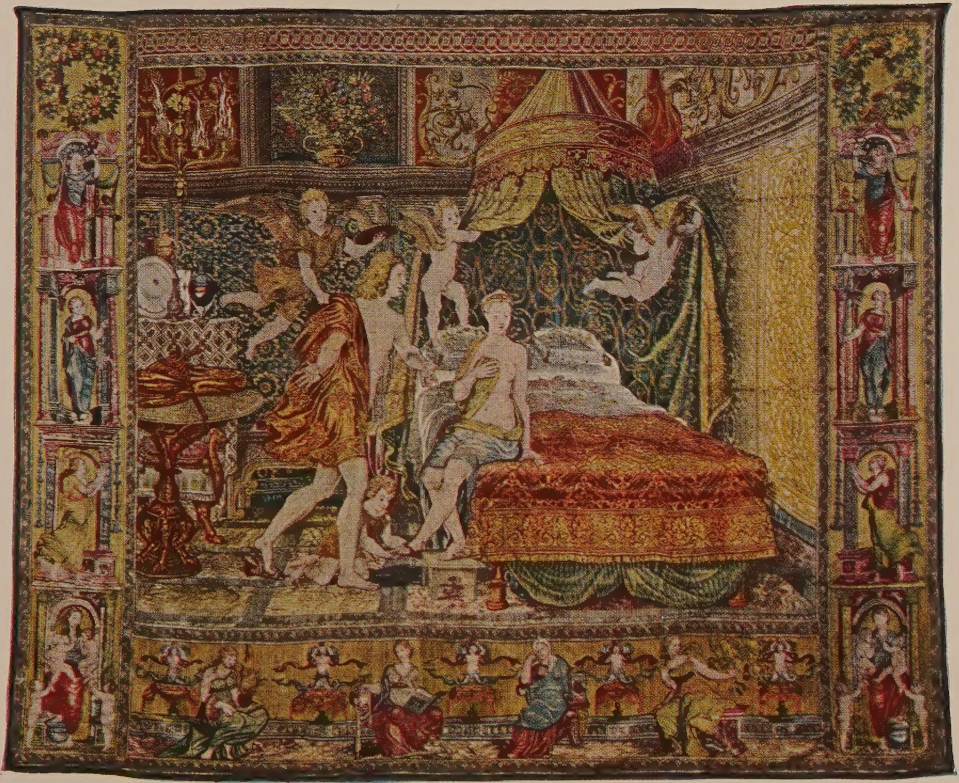

HERSE AND MERCURY
Renaissance Brussels Tapestry, Italian Cartoon. W. de Pannemaker, weaver.
Collection of George Blumenthal, Esq., New York

THE TAPESTRY BOOK

BY

HELEN CHURCHILL CANDEE

Author of "Decorative Styles and Periods"

WITH FOUR PLATES IN COLOUR AND NINETY-NINE ILLUSTRATIONS IN BLACK-AND-WHITE

TUDOR PUBLISHING CO.
NEW YORK

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New Edition 1935

Printed in the United States of America

TO
TWO CERTAIN BYZANTINE MADONNAS
AND THEIR OWNERS

AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Modesty so dominates the staff in art museums that I am requested not to make mention of those officers who have helped me with friendly courtesy and efficiency. To the officers and assistants at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and the Print Department in the Library of Congress in Washington, indebtedness is here publicly acknowledged with the regret that I may not speak of individuals. Photographs of tapestries are credited to Messrs. A. Giraudon, Paris; J. Laurent, Madrid; Alinari, Florence; Wm. Baumgarten, and Albert Herter, New York, and to those private collectors whose names are mentioned on the plates.

H. C. C.

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THE TAPESTRY BOOK

THE TAPESTRY BOOK

CHAPTER I

A FOREWORD

THE commercial fact that tapestries have immeasurably increased in value within the last five years, would have little interest were it not that this increase is the direct result of America's awakened appreciation of this form of art. It has come about in these latter days that tapestries are considered a necessity in the luxurious and elegant homes which are multiplying all over our land. And the enormous demand thus made on the supply, has sent the prices for rare bits into a dizzy altitude, and has made even the less perfect pieces seem scarce and desirable.

The opinion of two shrewd men of different types is interesting as bearing on the subject of tapestries. One with tastes fully cultivated says impressively, "Buy good old tapestries whenever you see them, for there are no more." The other says bluffly, " Tapestries? You can't touch 'em. The prices have gone way out of sight, and are going higher every day." The latter knows but one view, the commercial, yet both are right, and these two views are at the bottom of the present keen interest in tapestries in our country. Outside of this, Europe has collections which we never can equal, and that thought alone is enough to make us snatch eagerly at any opportunity to secure a piece. We may begin with our ambition set on museum treasures, but we can come happily down to the friendly fragments that fit our private purses and the wall-space by the inglenook.

Tapestries are not to be bought lightly, as one buys a summer coat, to throw aside at the change of taste or circumstance. They demand more of the buyer than mere money; they demand that loving understanding and intimate appreciation that exists between human friends. A profound knowledge of tapestries benefits in two ways, by giving the keenest pleasure, and by providing the collector—or the purchaser of a single piece—with a self-protection that is proof against fraud, unconscious or deliberate.

The first step toward buying must be a bit of pleasant study which shall serve in the nature of self-defence. Not by books alone, however, shall this subject be approached, but by happy jaunts to sympathetic museums, both at home and abroad, by moments snatched from the touch-and-go talk of afternoon tea in some friend's salon or library, or by strolling visits to dealers. These object lessons supplement the book, as a study of entomology is enlivened by a chase for butterflies in the flowery meads of June, or as botany is made endurable by lying on a bank of violets. All work and no play not only makes Jack a dull boy, but makes dull reading the book he has in hand.

The tale of tapestry itself carries us back to the unfathomable East which has a trick at dates, making the

Christian Era a modern epoch, and making of us but a newly-sprung civilisation in the history of the old grey world. After showing us that the East pre-empted originality for all time, the history of tapestry lightly lifts us over a few centuries and throws us into the romance of Gothic days, then trails us along through increasing European civilisation up to the great awakening, the Renaissance. Then it loiters in the pleasant ways of the kings of France during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, and finally falls upon modern effort, not limited to Europe now, but nesting also in the New World which is especially our own.

Tapestry, according to the interpretation of the word used in this book, is a pictured cloth, woven by an artist or a talented craftsman, in which the design is an integral part of the fabric, and not an embroidery stitched on a basic tissue. With this flat statement the review of tapestries from antiquity until our time may be read without fear of mistaking the term.

THE LOOM

The looms on which tapestries are made are such as have been known as long as the history of man is known, but we have come to call them high-warp and low-warp, or as the French have it, *haute lisse* and *basse lisse.* In the celebrated periods of weaving the high loom has been the one in use, and to it is accredited a power almost mysterious; yet the work of the two styles of loom are not distinguishable by the weave alone, and it is true that the low-warp looms were used in France when the manufacture of tapestries was permanently established by the Crown about 1600. So difficult is it to determine the work of the two looms that weavers themselves could not distinguish without the aid of a red thread which they at one time wove in the border. Yet because the years of the highest perfection in tapestries have been when the high loom was in vogue, some peculiar power is supposed to reside within it. That the high movements of the fine arts have been contemporary with perfection in tapestries, seems not to be taken into consideration.

NECESSARY FRENCH TERMS

French terms belong so much to the art of tapestry weaving that it is hard to find their English equivalent. Tapestries of *verdure* and of *personnages* describe the two general classes, the former being any charming mass of greenery, from the Gothic *millefleurs,* and curling leaves with animals beneath, to the lovely landscapes of sophisticated park and garden which made Beauvais famous in the Eighteenth Century. *Tapisseries des personnages* have, as the name implies, the human figure as the prominent part of the design. The shuttle or bobbin of the high loom is called a *broche,* and that of the low loom a *flute.* Weavers throughout Europe, whether in the Low Countries or in France, were called *tapissiers,* and this term was so liberal as to need explaining.

WORKERS' FUNCTIONS

The tapestry factory was under the guidance of a director; under him were the various persons required for the work. Each tapestry woven had a directing artist, as the design was of primary importance. This man had the power to select the silks and wools for the work, that they might suit his eye as to colour. But there was also a *chef d'atelier* who was an artist weaver, and he directed this matter and all others when the artist of the cartoons was not present. Under him were the tapissiers who did the actual weaving, and under these, again, were the apprentices, who began as boys and served three years before being allowed to try their hands at a " 'prentice job" or essay at finished work.

WEAVERS

The word weaver means so little in these days that it is necessary to consider what were the conditions exacted of the weavers of tapestries in the time of tapestry's highest perfection. A tapissier was an artist with whom a loom took place of an easel, and whose brush was a shuttle, and whose colour-medium was thread instead of paints. This places him on a higher plane than that of mere weaver, and makes the term tapissier seem fitter. Much liberty was given him in copying designs and choosing colours. In the Middle Ages, when the Gothic style prevailed, the master-weaver needed often no other cartoon for his work than his own sketches enlarged from the miniatures found in the luxurious missals of the day. These historic books were the luxuries of kings, were kept with the plate and jewels, so precious were considered their exquisitely painted scenes in miniature. From them the master-weaver drew largely for such designs as *The Seven Deadly Sins* and other "morality" subjects.

Master-weavers were many in the best years of tapestry weaving; indeed, a man must have attained the dignity and ability of that position before being able to produce those marvels of skill which were woven between 1475 and 1575 in Flanders, France and Italy. Their aids, the apprentices, pique the fancy, as Puck harnessed to labour might do. They were probably as mischievous, as shirking, as exasperating as boys have ever known how to be, but those little unwilling slaves of art in the Middle Ages make an appeal to the imagination more vivid than that of the shabby lunch-box boy of to-day.

DYERS

Accessory to the weavers, and almost as important, were the dyers who prepared the thread for use. The conscientiousness of their work cries out for recognition when the threads they dyed are almost unaltered in colour after five hundred years of exposure to their enemies, light and air. Dye stuffs were precious in those days, and so costly that even threads of gold and silver (which in general were supplied by the client ordering the tapestry) hardly exceeded in value certain dyed wools and silk. All of these workers, from director down to apprenticed lad, were bound by the guild to do or not do, according to its infinite code, to the end that the art of tapestry-making be held to the highest standards. The laws of the guilds make interesting reading. The guild prevailed all over Europe and regulated all crafts. In

Florence even to-day evidences of its power are on every side, and the Guildhall in London attests its existence there. Moreover, the greatest artists belonged to the guilds, uniting themselves usually by work of the goldsmith, as Benvenuto Cellini so quaintly describes in his naïve autobiography.

GUILDS

It was these same protective laws of the guilds that in the end crippled the hand of the weaver. The laws grew too many to comply with, in justice to talent, and talent with clipped wings could no longer soar. At the most brilliant period of tapestry production Flanders was to the fore. All Europe was appreciating and demanding the unequalled products of her ateliers. It was but human to want to keep the excellence, to build a wall of restrictions around her especial craft that would prevent rivals, and at the same time to press the ateliers to execute all the orders that piled in toward the middle of the Sixteenth Century.

But although the guilds could make wise laws and enforce them, it could not execute in haste and retain the standard of excellence. And thus came the gradual decay of the art in Brussels, a decay which guild-laws had no power to arrest.

GOTHIC PERIOD

The first period in tapestries which interests—except the remnants of Egyptian and aboriginal work—is that of the Middle Ages, the early Gothic, because that is when the art became a considerable one in Europe. It is a time of romance, of chivalry, of deep religious feeling, and yet seems like the childhood of modernity. Is it the fault of crudity in pictorial art, or the fault of romances that we look upon those distant people as more elemental than we, and thus feel for them the indulgent compassion that a child excites? However it is, theirs is to us a simple time of primitive emotion and romance, and the tapestries they have left us encourage the whim.

The time of Gothic perfection in tapestry-making is included in the few years lying between 1475 and 1520. Life was at that time getting less difficult, and art had time to develop. It was no longer left to monks and lonely ladies, in convent and castle, but was the serious consideration of royalty and nobility. No need to dwell on the story of modern art, except as it affects the art of tapestry weaving. With the improvement of drawing that came in these years, a greater excellence of weave was required to translate properly the meaning of the artist. The human face which had hitherto been either blank or distorted in expression, now required a treatment that should convey its subtlest shades of expression. Gifted weavers rose to the task, became almost inspired in the use of their medium, and produced such works of their art as have never been equalled in any age. These are the tapestries that grip the heart, that cause a *frisson* of joy to the beholder. And these are the tapestries we buy, if kind chance allows. If they cannot be ours to live with, then away to the museum in all haste and often, to feast upon their beauties.

RENAISSANCE

That great usurper, the Renaissance, came creeping up to the North where the tapestry looms were weaving fairy webs. Pope Leo X wanted tapestries, those of the marvellous Flemish weave. But he wanted those of the new style of drawing, not the sweet restraint and finished refinement of the Gothic. Raphael's cartoons were sent to Brussels' workshops, and thus was the North inoculated with the Renaissance, and thus began the second phase of the supreme excellency of Flemish tapestries. It was the Renaissance expressing itself in the wondrous textile art. The weavers were already perfect in their work, no change of drawing could perplex them. But to their deftness with their medium was now added the rich invention of the Italian artists of the Renaissance, at the period of perfection when restraint and delicacy were still dominant notes.

It was the overworking of the craft that led to its decadence. Toward the end of the Sixteenth Century the extraordinary period of Brussels perfection had passed.

But tapestry played too important a part in the life and luxury of those far-away centuries for its production to be allowed to languish. The magnificence of every great man, whether pope, king or dilettante, was ill-expressed before his fellows if he were not constantly surrounded by the storied cloths that were the indispensable accessories of wealth and glory. Palaces and castles were hung with them, the tents of military encampments were made gorgeous with their richness, and no joust nor city procession was conceivable without their colours flaunting in the sun as background to plumed knights and fair ladies. Venice looked to them to brighten her historic stones on days of carnival, and Paris spread them to welcome kings.

FRANCE

When, therefore, Brussels no longer supplied the tissues of her former excellence, opportunity came for some other centre to rise. The next important producer was Paris, and in Paris the art has consistently stayed. Other brief periods of perfection have been attained elsewhere, but Paris once establishing the art, has never let it drop, not even in our own day—but that is not to be considered at this moment.

Divers reigns of divers kings, notably that of Henri IV, fostered the weaving of tapestry and brought it to an interesting stage of development, after which Louis XIV established the Gobelins. From that time on for a hundred years France was without a rival, for the decadent work of Brussels could not be counted as such. Although the work of Italy in the Seventeenth Century has its admirers, it is guilty of the faults of all of Italy's art during the dominance of Bernini's ideals.

AMERICAN INTEREST

America is too late on the field to enter the game of antiquity. We have no history of this wonderful textile art to tell. But ours is the power to acquire the lovely examples of the marvellous historied hangings of other times and of those nations which were our forebears before the New World was discovered. And we are acquiring them from every corner of Europe where they may have been hiding in old château or forgotten chest. To the museums go the most marvellous examples given or lent by those altruistic collectors who wish to share their treasures with a hungry public. But to the mellow atmosphere of private homes come the greater part of the tapestries. To buy them wisely, a smattering of their history is a requisite. Within the brief compass of this book is to be found the points important for the amateur, but for a profounder study he must turn to those huge volumes in French which omit no details.

Not entirely by books can he learn. Association with the objects loved, counts infinitely more in coming to an understanding. Happy he who can make of tapestries the *raison d'être* for a few months' loitering in Europe, and can ravish the eye and intoxicate the imagination with the storied cloths found hanging in England, in France, in Spain, in Italy, in Sweden, and learn from them the fascinating tales of other men's lives in other men's times.

Then, when the tour is finished and a modest tapestry is hung at home, it represents to its instructed owner the concentrated tale of all he has seen and learned. In the weave he sees the ancient craftsman sitting at his loom. In the pattern is the drawing of the artist of the day, in the colours, the dyes most rare and costly; in the metal, the gold and silver of a duke or prince; and in the tale told by the figures he reads a romance of chivalry or history, which has the glamour given by the haze of distant time to human action.

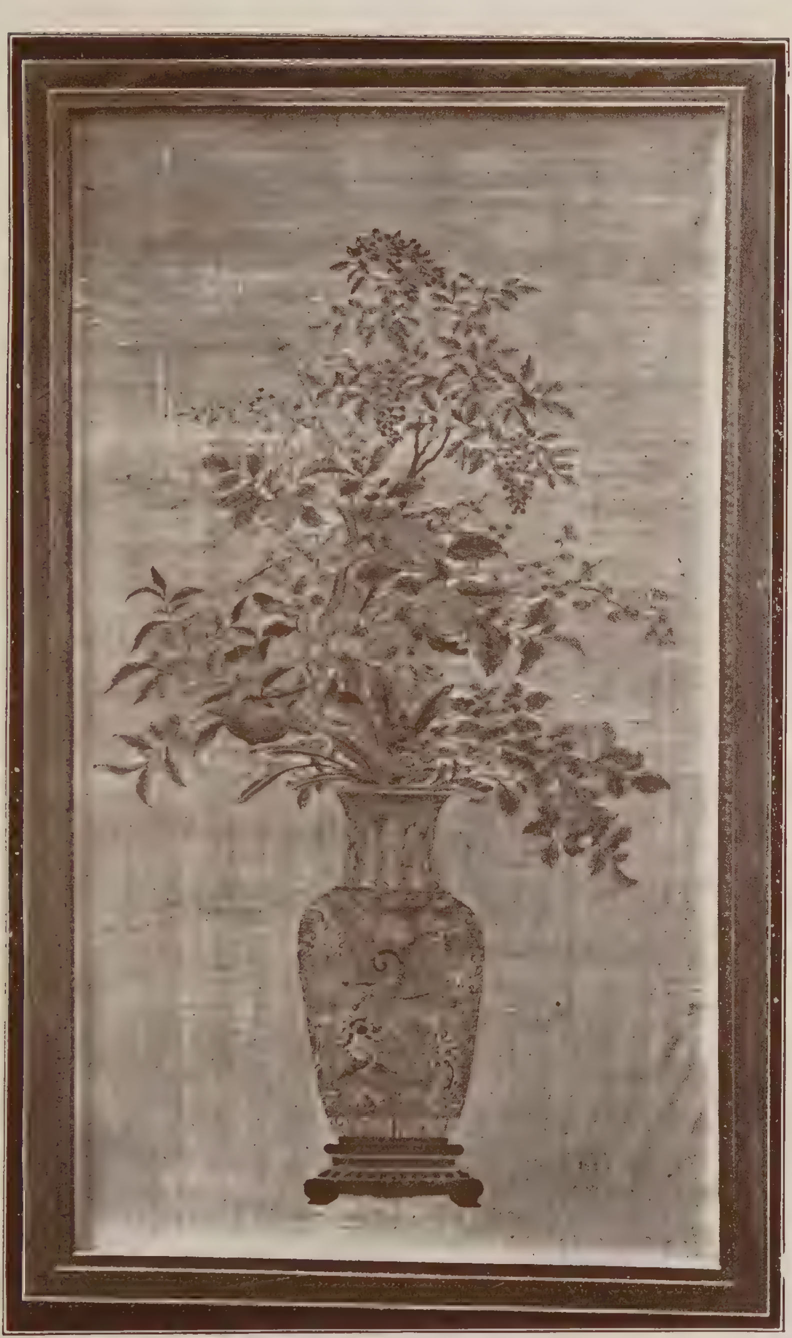
To enter a house where tapestries abound, is to feel oneself welcomed even before the host appears. The bending verdure invites, the animated figures welcome, and at once the atmosphere of elegance and cordiality envelopes the happy visitor.

To live in a house abundantly hung with old tapestries, to live there day by day, makes of labour a pleasure and of leisure a delight. It is no small satisfaction in our work-a-day life to live amidst beauty, to be sure that every time the eyes are raised from the labour of writing or sewing—or of bridge whist, if you like—they encounter something worthy and lovely. In the big living-room of the home, when the hours come in which the family gathers, on a rainy morning, or on any afternoon when the shadows grow grim outside and the afternoon tea-tray is brought in whispering its discreet tune of friendly communion, the tapestries on the walls seem to gather closer, to enfold in loving embrace the sheltered group, to promise protection and to augment brotherly love.

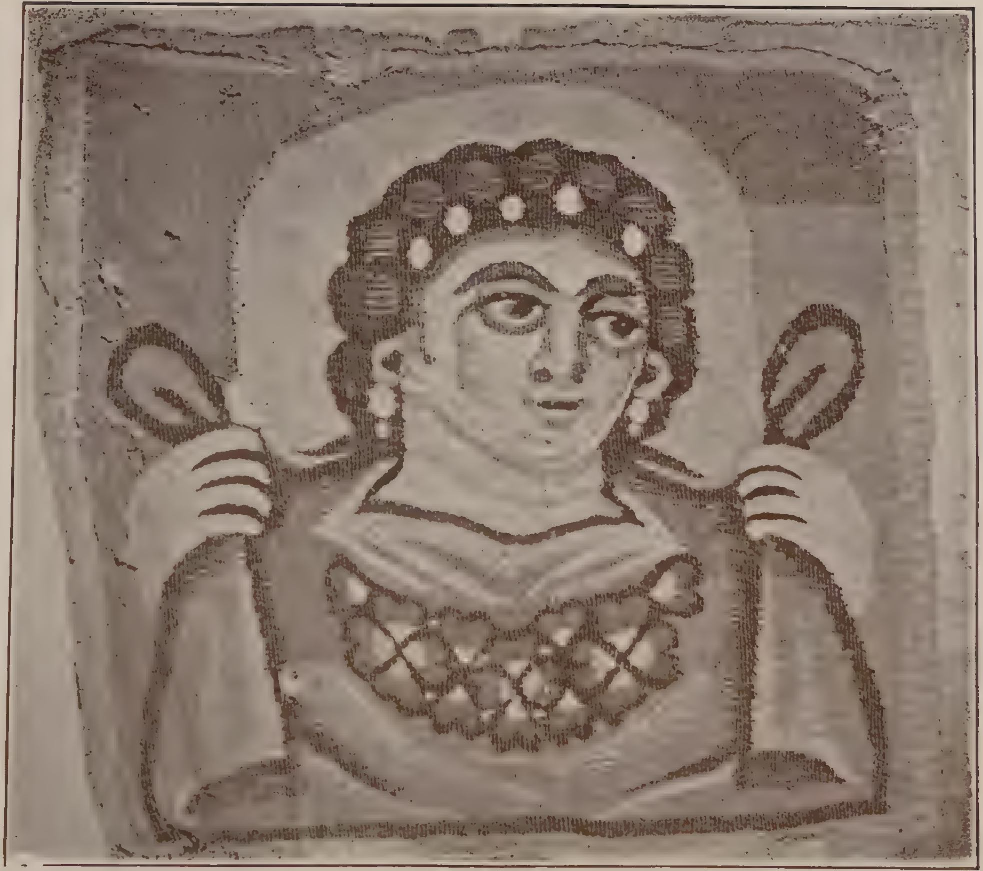
In the dining-room the glorious company assembles, so that he who eats therein, attends a feast on Olympus, even though the dyspeptic's fast be his lot. If the eyes gaze on Coypel's gracious ladies, under fruit and roses, with adolescent gods adoring, what matters if the palate is chastised? In a dining-room soft-hung with piquant scenes, even buttermilk and dog-biscuit, burnt canvasback and cold Burgundy lose half their bitterness.

When night is well started in its flight, perhaps one only, one lover of the silence and the solitude, loath to give away to soft sleep the quiet hours, this one remains behind when all the others have flown bedward, and to him the neighbouring tapestries speak a various language. From the easy chair he sees the firelight play on the verdure with the effect of a summer breeze, the gracious foliage all astir. The figures in this enchanted wood are set in motion and imagination brings them into the life of the moment, makes of them sympathetic playmates coaxing one to love, as they do, the land of romance. Before their imperturbable jocundity what bad humour can exist? All the old songs of mock pastoral times come singing in the ears, "It happened on a day, in the merry month of May," "Shepherds all and maidens fair," "It was a lover and his lass," "Phœbus arise, and paint the skies," *et cetera.* Animated by the fire, in the silence of the winter night the loving horde gathers and ministers to the mind afflicted with much hard practicality and the strain of keeping up with modern inexorable times. This sweet procession on the walls, thanks be to lovely art, needs no keeping up with, merely asks to scatter joy and to soften the asperities of a too arduous day.

All the way up the staircase in the house of tapestries are dainty bits of *millefleurs,* that Gothic invention for transferring a block of the spring woods from under the trees into a man-made edifice. It may have a deep indigo background or a dull red—like the shades of moss or like last year's fallen leaves—but over it all is abundantly sprinkled dainty bluebells, anemones, daisies, all the spring beauties in joyous self-assertion and happy mingling. With such flowery guides to mark the way the path to slumberland is followed. Once within the bedroom, the poppies of the hangings spread drowsy influence, and the happy sleeper passes into unconsciousness, passes through the flowered border of the ancient square, into the scene beyond, becomes one of those storied persons in the enchanted land and lives with them in jousts and tourneys or in *fêtes champêtres* at lovely châteaux. The magic spell of the house of tapestries has fallen like the dew from heaven to bless the striver in our modern life of exigency and fatigue.



CHINESE TAPESTRY
Chien Lung Period



COPTIC TAPESTRY
About 300 A.D.

CHAPTER II

ANTIQUITY

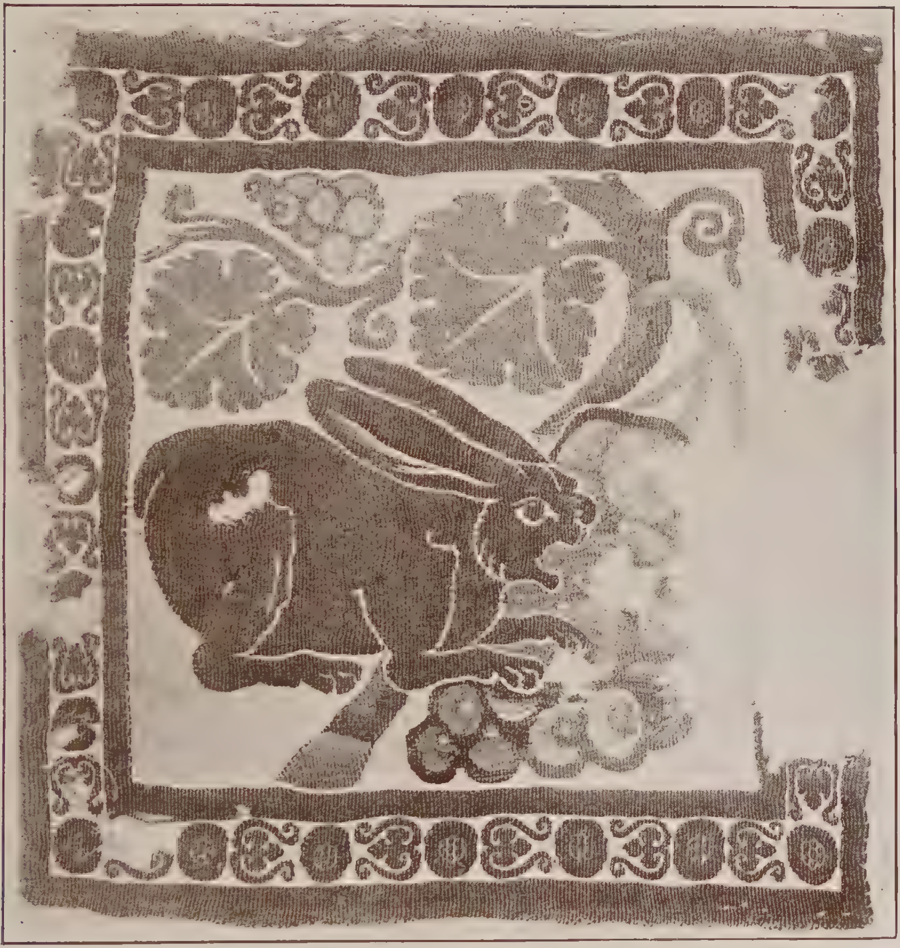
EGYPT and China, India and Persia, seem made to take the conceit from upstart nations like those of Europe and our own toddling America. Directly we scratch the surface and look for the beginning of applied arts, the lead takes us inevitably to the oldest civilisation. It would seem that in a study of fabrics which are made in modern Europe, it were enough to find their roots in the mediæval shades of the dark ages; but no, back we must go to the beginning of history where man leaped from the ambling dinosaur, which then modestly became extinct, and looking upon the lands of the Nile and the Yangtsi-kiang found them good, and proceeded to pre-empt all the ground of applied arts, so that from that time forward all the nations of the earth were and are obliged to acknowledge that there is nothing new under the sun.

In the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York is a bit of tapestry, Coptic, that period where Greek and Egyptian drawing were intermixed, a woman's head adorned with much vanity of head-dress, woven two or three centuries after Christ. (Plate facing page 15.) In the Boston Museum of Fine Arts are other rare specimens of this same time. (Plates facing pages 16 and 17.) Looking further back, an ancient decoration shows Penelope at her high loom, four hundred years before the Christian era; and one, still older, shows the Egyptians weaving similarly three thousand years before that epoch.

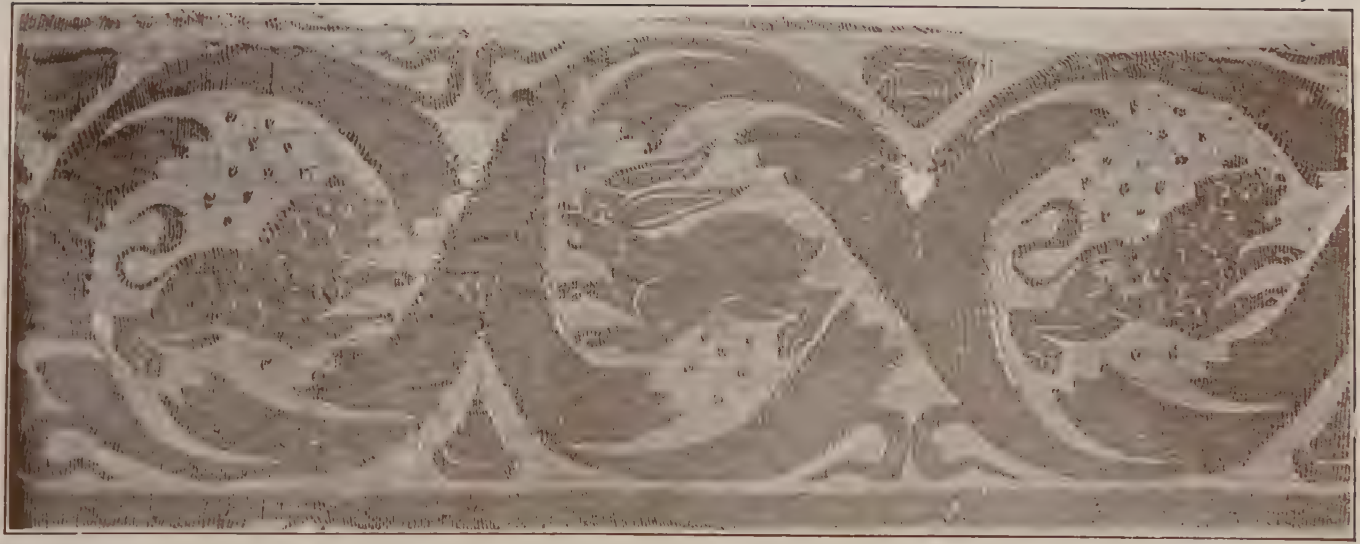
It is not altogether thrilling to read that civilised people of ancient times wove fabrics for dress and decoration, but it certainly is interesting to learn that they were masters of an art which we carelessly attribute to Europe of six centuries back, and to find that the weaving apparatus and the mode of work were almost identical. The Coptic tapestry of the Third Century is woven in the same manner as the tapestries that come to us from Europe as the flower of comparatively recent times, and its dyes and treatment of shading are identical with the Gothic times. Penelope's loom as pictured on an ancient vase, is the same in principle as the modern high-warp loom, although lacking a bit in convenience to the weaver; and so we can easily imagine the lovely lady at work on her famous web, "playing for time," during Ulysses' absence, when she sat up o' nights undoing her lovely stint of the day.

And the Egyptian loom shown in ancient pictures—that is even more modern than Penelope's, although it was set up three thousand years before, a last guide-post on the backward way to the misty land called prehistoric.

But as there is really little interest except for the archeologist in digging so far into the past for an art that has left us but traditions and museum fragments, let us skim but lightly the surface of this time, only picking up the glistening facts that attract the mind's eye, so that



COPTIC TAPESTRY
Boston Museum of Fine Arts



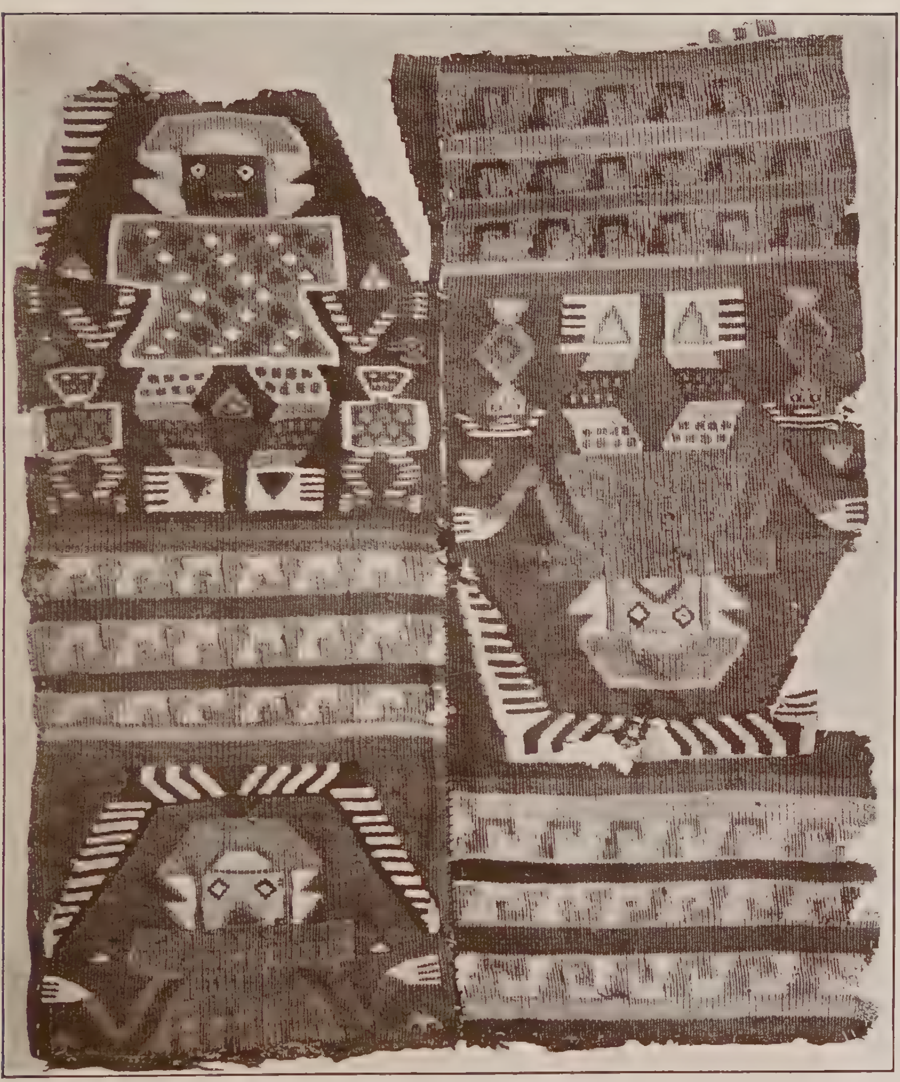
COPTIC TAPESTRY
Boston Museum of Fine Arts

we may quickly reach the enchanted land of more recent times which yet appear antique to the modern.

There are those to whom reading the Bible was a forced task during childhood, a class which slipped the labour as soon as years gave liberty of choice. There are others who have always turned as naturally to its accounts of grand ceremony and terrible battles as to the accounts of Cæsar, Cœur de Lion, Charlemagne. But in either case, whatever the reason for the eye to absorb these pages of ancient Hebrew history, the impression is gained of superb pomp. And always concerned with it are descriptions of details, lovingly impressed, as though the chronicler was sure of the interest of his audience. In this enumeration, decorative textiles always played a part. Such textiles as they were exceed in extravagance of material any that we know of European production, for in many cases they were woven entirely of gold and silver, and even set with jewels. These gorgeous fabrics shone like suns on the magnificent pomp of priest and ruler, and declared the wealth and power of the nation. They departed from the original intention of protecting shivering humanity from chill draughts or from close and cold association with the stones of architectural construction, and became a luxury of the eye, a source of bewilderment to the fancy and a lively intoxication to those who—irrespective of class, or of century—love to compute display in coin.

But, dipping into the history of one ancient country after another, it is easy to see that the usual fabric for hanging was woven of wool, of cotton and of silk, and carried the design in the weaving. Babylon the great, Egypt under the Pharaohs, Greece in its heroic times, Rome under the Emperors—not omitting China and India of the Far East—these countries of ancient peoples all knew the arts of dyeing and weaving, of using the materials that we employ, and of introducing figures symbolic, geometric, or realistic into the weaving. Beyond a doubt the high loom has been known to man since prehistoric times. It may be discouraging to those who like to feel that tapestry properly belongs to Europe only, —Europe of the last six centuries—to find that the art has been sifted down through the ages; but in reality it is but one more link between us and the centuries past, the human touch that revivifies history, that unites humanity. People of the past wear a haze about them, are immovable and rigid as their pictured representations. The Assyrian is to us a huge man of impossible beard, the Egyptian is a lean angle fixed in posture, the Greek is eternally posed for the sculptor.

But once we can find that these people were not forever transfixed to frieze, but were as simple, as industrious, as human as we, the kinship is established, and through their veins begins to flow the stream that is common to all humanity. These people felt the same need for elegantly covering the walls of their homes that we in this country of new homes feel, and the craftsmen led much the same lives as do craftsmen of to-day. Even in the matter of expense, of money which purchasers were willing to spend for woven decorative fabrics, we see no novelty in the high prices of to-day, the Twentieth Cen-



TAPESTRY FOUND IN GRAVES IN PERU
Date prior to Sixteenth Century

tury. *The Mantle of Alcisthenes* is celebrated for having been bought by the Carthaginians for the equal of a hundred thousand dollars.

Thus we connect ourselves with the remote past in making a continuous history. But as the purpose of this book is to assist the owner of tapestries to understand the story of his hangings and to enable the purchaser or collector to identify tapestries on his own knowledge instead of through the prejudiced statements of the salesman, it is useless to dwell long upon the fabrics that we can only see through exercise of the imagination or in disintegrated fragments in museums.

Then away with Circe and her leisure hours of weaving, with Helen and her heroic canvas, and the army of grandiose Biblical folk, and let us come westward into Europe in short review of the textiles called tapestry which were produced from the early Christian centuries to the time of the Crusades, and thus will we approach more modern times.

So far as known, high-warp weaving was not universally used in Europe in the first part of the Middle Ages. Whether plain or figured, most of the fabrics of that time that have come down to us for hangings or for clothing, are woven, with the decorative pattern executed by the needle on woven cloth. In Persia and neighbouring states, however, the high-warp loom was used.[1]

Europe in the Middle Ages was a place so savage, so devastated by war and by neighbouring malice, that to consider it is to hear the clash of steel, to feel the pangs of hunger, to experience the fearsome chill of dungeons or moated castles. It was a time when those who could huddle in fortresses mayhap died natural deaths, but those who lived in the world were killed as a matter of course. Man was man's enemy and to be killed on sight.

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[1] Eugene Müntz, "History of Tapestry."

In such gay times of carnage, art is dead. Men there were who drew designs and executed them, for the *luxe* of the eye is ever demanding, but the designs were timid and stunted and came far from the field of art. Fabrics were made and worn, no doubt, but when looms were like to be destroyed and the weavers with them, scant attention was given to refinements.

By the time the Tenth Century was reached matters had improved. We come into the light of records. It is positively known that the town of Saumur, down in the lovely country below Tours, became the destination of a quantity of wall-hangings, carpets, curtains, and seat covers woven of wool. This was by order of the third Abbot Robert of the Monastery of St. Florent, one of those vigorous, progressive men whose initiative inspires a host. It is recorded that he also ordered two pieces of tapestry executed, not of wool exclusively, but with silk introduced, and in these the figures of the designs were the beasts that were then favourites in decoration and that still showed the influence of Oriental drawing.

Before enumerating other authentic examples of early tapestries it is well to speak of the reason for their being invariably associated with the church. The impression left by history is that folk of those days must have been universally religious when not cutting each other in bits with bloody cutlass. The reason is, of course, that when poor crushed humanity began to revive from the devastating onslaughts of fierce Northern barbarians, it was with a timid huddling in monasteries, for there was found immunity from attack. The lord of the castle was forced to go to war or to resist attack in his castle, but the monastery was exempt from whatever conscription the times imposed, and frocked friars were always on hand were defence needed. Thus it came about that monasteries became treasure-houses, the only safe ones, were built strong, were sufficiently manned, and therefore were the safe-deposit of whatever articles of concentrated value the great lord of the Middle Ages might accumulate. Many tapestries thus deposited became gifts to the institution which gave them asylum.

The arts and crafts of the Middle Ages were in the hands of the monasteries, monks and friars being the only persons with safety and leisure. Weaving fell naturally to them to execute as an art. In the castles, necessary weaving for the family was done by the women, as on every great lord's domains were artisans for all crafts; and great ladies emulated Penelope and Helen of old in passing their hours of patience and anxiety with fabricating gorgeous cloths. But these are exceptional, and deal with such grand ladies as Queen Matilda, who with her maidens embroidered (not wove) the Bayeux Tapestry, and with the Duchess Gonnor, wife of Richard First, who embroidered for the church of Notre Dame at Rouen a history of the Virgin and Saints.[1]

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[1] Jubinal, "Recherches," Vol. I.

To the monasteries must be given the honour of preserving this as many other arts, and of stimulating the laity which had wealth and power to present to religious institutions the best products of the day. The subjects executed inside the monastery were perforce religious, many revelling in the horrors of martyrology, and those intended as gifts or those ordered by the clergy were religious in subject for the sake of appropriateness. It is interesting to note the sweet childlike attitude of all lower Europe toward the church in these years, a sort of infantile way of leaving everything in its hands, all knowledge, all wisdom, all power. It was not even necessary to read or write, as the clergy conveniently concerned themselves with literacy. As late as the beginning of the Fifteenth Century Philip the Hardy, the great Duke of Burgundy, in ordering a tapestry, signed the order, not with his autograph, for he could not, but with his mark, for he, too, left pen-work to the clerks of the church.

That pile of concentrated royal history, the old abbey of St. Denis, received, late in the Tenth Century, one of the evidences of royal patronage that every abbey must have envied. It was a woven representation of the world, as scientists of that day imagined our half-discovered planet, and was presented by Queen Adelaide, the wife of Hugh Capet, whose descendants reigned for three hundred years.[1]

While dealing with records rather than with objects on which the eye can gaze and the hand can rest, note must be made of an order of a Count of Poitou, William V, to a factory for tapestries then existing in Poitiers, showing that the art of weaving had in that spot jumped the monastery walls in 1025.[1] The order was for a large hanging with subjects taken from the Scriptures, but given the then modern touch by introducing portraits of kings and emperors and their favourite animals transfixed in ways peculiar to the nature of the day.

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[1] F. Michel, "Recherches."

A century later, another Abbot of St. Florent in Saumur had hangings made important enough to be recorded. One of these represented the four and twenty elders of the Apocalypse with musical instruments, and other subjects taken from the Revelation of John. This subject was one of unending interest to the artists of that time who seemed to find in its depicting a serving of both God and imagination.

Among the few tapestries of this period, those of the Cathedral at Halberstadt must be mentioned, partly by way of conscientious chronicling, partly that the interested traveller may, as he travels, know where to find the rare specimens of the hobby he is pursuing. This is a high-warp tapestry which authorities variously place as the product of the Eleventh or the Twelfth Centuries. Entirely regardless of its age, it has for us the charm of the craft of hands long vanished, and of primitive art in all its simplicity of artifice. The subject is religious—could hardly have been otherwise in those monastic days—and for church decoration, and to fit the space they were woven to occupy, each of the two parts was but three and a half feet high although more than fourteen yards long.

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[1] Jubinal, "Recherches."

Each important event recorded in history has its expression in the material product of its time, and this is one of the charms of studying the liberal arts. Tapestry more than almost any other handicraft has left us a pictured history of events in a time when records were scarce. The effect of the Crusades was noticeable in the impetus it gave to tapestry, not only by bringing Europe into fresh contact with Oriental design but by increasing the desire for luxurious stuffs. The returning crusaders—what traveller's tales did they not tell of the fabrics of the great Oriental sovereigns and their subjects, the soft rugs, the tent coverings, the gorgeous raiment; and these tales they illustrated with what fragments they could port in their travellers' packs. Here lay inspiration for a continent.

CHAPTER III

MODERN AWAKENING

IN the Fourteenth Century, tapestry, the high-warp product, began to play an important part in the refinements of the day. We have seen the tendency of the past time to embellish and soften churches and monastic institutions with hangings. Records mostly in clerical Latin, speak of these as curtains for doorways, dossers for covering seats, and the backs of benches, and baldachins, as well as carpets for use on the floor. Subjects were ecclesiastic, as the favourite Apocalypse; or classic, like that of the Quedlimburg hanging which fantastically represents the marriage of Mercury and Philology.

But in the Thirteenth Century the political situation had improved and men no longer slept in armour and women no longer were prepared to thrust all household valuables into a coffer on notice that the enemy was approaching over the plains or up the rocks. Therefore, homes began to be a little less rude in their comforts. Stone walls were very much the rule inside as well as out, but it became convenient then to cover their grim asperities with the woven draperies, the remains of which so interest us to-day, and which we in our accession of luxuriousness would add to the already gently finished apartments. To put ourselves back into one of those castle homes we are to imagine a room of stone walls, fitted with big iron hooks, on which hung pictured tapestry which reached all around, even covering the doors in its completeness. To admit of passing in and out the door a slit was made, or two tapestries joined at this spot. Set Gothic furniture scantily about such a room, a coffer or two, some high-backed chairs, a generous table, and there is a room which the art of to-day with its multiple ingenuity cannot surpass for beauty and repose.

But such a room gave opportunity for other matters in the Thirteenth Century. Customs were less polite and morals more primitive. Important people desiring important information were given to the spying and eavesdropping which now has passed out of polite fashion. And those ancient rooms favoured the intriguer, for the hangings were suspended a foot or two away from the wall, and a man or a woman, for that matter, might easily slip behind and witness conversations to which the listener had not been invited. So it was customary on occasions of intimate and secret converse lightly to thrust a sharpened blade behind the curtains. If, as in the case in "Hamlet," the sword pierced a human quarry, so much the worse for the listener who thus gained death and lost its dignity.

Before leaving this ancient chamber it is well to impress ourselves with the interesting fact that tapestries were originally meant to be suspended loosely, liberally, from the upper edge only, and to fall in folds or gentle undulations, thus gaining in decorative value and elegance. This practice had an important effect on the design, and also gave an appearance of movement to human figures and to foliage, as each swayed in light folds.

When considering tapestries of the Thirteenth Century we are only contemplating the stones of history, for the actual products of the looms of that time are not for us; they are all gathered into museums, public or ecclesiastic. The same might be said of tapestries of the Fourteenth Century, and almost of the Fifteenth. But those old times are so full of romance, that their history is worth our toying with. It adds infinite joy to the possessing of old tapestries, and converts museum visits into a keen chase for the elusive but fascinating figures of the past.

Let us then absorb willingly one or two dry facts. High-warp tapestry we have traced lightly from Egypt through Greece and Rome and, almost losing the thread in the Middle Ages, have seen it rising a virile industry, nursed in monasteries. It was when the stirrings of artistic life were commencing under the Van Eycks in the North and under Giotto and the Tuscans in the South that the weaving of tapestries reached a high standard of production and from that time until the Nineteenth Century has been an important artistic craft. The Thirteenth Century saw it started, the Fourteenth saw the beginnings of important factories, and the Fifteenth bloomed into full productions and beauty of the style we call Gothic.

In these early times of the close of the Thirteenth Century and the beginning of the Fourteenth, the best known high-warp factories were centred in northern and midland provinces of France and Flanders. Paris and Arras being the towns most famed for their productions. As these were able to supply the rest of Europe, the skilled technique was lost otherwheres, so that later, when Italy, Germany and England wished to catch up again their ancient work, they were obliged to ask instruction of the Franco-Flemish high-warp workers.[1]

It is not possible in the light of history for either Paris or Arras to claim the invention of so nearly a prehistoric art as that of high-warp tapestry, and there is much discussion as to which of these cities should be given the honour of superiority and priority in the work of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries.

Factories existed at both places and each had its rules of manufacture which regulated the workman and stimulated its excellence. The factories at Paris, however, were more given to producing copies of carpets brought from the East by returning crusaders, and these were intended for floors. The craftsmen were sometimes alluded to as *tapissiers Sarrazinois,* named, as is easily seen, after the Saracens who played so large a part in the adventurous voyages of the day. But in Paris in 1302, by instigation of the Provost Pierre le Jumeau, there were associated with these tapissiers or workmen, ten others, for the purpose of making high-warp tapestry, and these were bound with all sorts of oaths not to depart from the strict manner of proceeding in this valued handicraft.

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[1] **Eugene Müntz, "La Tapisserie."**

Indeed, the Articles of Faith, nor the Vows of the Rosicrucians, could not be more inviolable than the promises demanded of the early tapestry workers. In some cases—notably a factory of Brussels, Brabant, in the Sixteenth Century—there were frightful penalties attendant upon the breaking of these vows, like the loss of an ear or even of a hand.

The records of the undertaking of the Provost Pierre le Jumeau in introducing the high-warp (*haute lisse*) workers into the factory where Sarrazinois and other fabrics were produced, means only that the improvement had begun, but not that Paris had never before practised an art so ancient.

The name of Nicolas Bataille is one of the earliest which we can surround with those props of records that please the searcher for exact detail.[1] He was both manufacturer and merchant and was a man of Paris in the reign of Charles VI, a king who patronised him so well that the workshops of Paris benefited largely. The king's brother becoming envious, tried to equal him in personal magnificence and gave orders almost as large as those of the king. Philip the Hardy, uncle of the king, also employed this designer whose importance has not lessened in the descent of the centuries.

What makes Bataille of special interest to us is that we cannot only read of him in fascinating chronicles as well as dry histories, but we can ourselves see his wondrous works. In the cathedral at Angers hangs a tapestry executed by him; it is a part of the *Apocalypse* (favourite subject) drawn by Dourdin, who was artist of the cartoons as well as artist to Charles V.

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[1] For extensive reading see Guiffrey, "Nicolas Bataille, tapissier parisien," and "L'Historie General de la Tapisserie," the section called "Les Tapisseries Francaises."

In those days the weaver occupied much the same place in relation to the cartoonist as the etcher does now to the painter. That is to say, that because the drawing was his inspiration, the weaver was none the less an artist of originality and talent.

These celebrated hangings at Angers, although commenced in 1376 for Louis of Anjou, were not completed in all the series until 1490, therefore Bataille's work was on the first ones, finished on Christmas, 1379. The design includes imposing figures, each seated on a Gothic throne reading and meditating. The larger scenes are topped with charming figures of angels in primitive skies of the "twisted ribbon" style of cloud, angels whose duty and whose joy is to trump eternally and float in defiance of natural laws of gravitation.

The museum at the Gobelins factory in Paris shows to wondering eyes the other authentic example of late Fourteenth Century high-warp tapestry, as woven in the early Paris workshops. It portrays with a lovely naïve simplicity *The Presentation in the Temple*. This with the pieces of the *Apocalypse* at Angers are all that are positively known to have come from the Paris workshops of the late Fourteenth Century.

History steps in with an event that crushed the industry in Paris. Just when design and execution were at their highest excellence, and production was prolific, political events began to annihilate the trade. The English King, Henry V, crossed the Channel and occupied Paris in 1422. Thus, under the oppression of the invaders, the art of tapestry was discouraged and fell by the way, not to rise lustily again in Paris for two hundred years.

CHAPTER IV

FIFTEENTH CENTURY IN FRANCE AND FLANDERS

WHETHER Arras began as early as Paris is a question better left unsettled if only for the sake of furnishing a subject of happy controversy between the champions of the two opinions. But certain it is that with fewer distractions to disturb her craftsmen, and under the stimulus of certain ducal and royal patrons, Arras succeeded in advancing the art more than did her celebrated neighbour. It was Arras, too, that gave the name to the fabric, a name which appears in England as arras and in Italy as arazzo, as though there was no other parent-region for the much-needed and much-prized stuffs than the busy Flemish town.

Among the early records is found proof that in 1311, a countess of the province of Artois, of which Arras was the capital, bought a figured cloth in that city, and two years later ordered various works in high warp.[1] It is she who became ruler of the province. To patronise the busy town of her own domains, Arras, she ordered from there the hangings that were its specialty. Paris also shared her patronage. She took as husband Otho, Count of Burgundy, and set his great family the fashion in the way of patronising the tapestry looms.

It was in the time of Charles V of France, that the

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[1] **Canon de Haisnes, "La Tapisserie."**

Burgundian duke Philip, called the Hardy, began to patronise conspicuously the Arras factories. In 1393, as de Barante delightfully chronicles, the gorgeous equipments of this duke were more than amazing when he went to arrange peace with the English at Lelingien.[1]

The town chosen for the pourparlers, wherein assembled the English dukes, Lancaster and Gloucester and their attendants, as well as the cortége attending the Duke of Burgundy, was a poor little village ruined by wars. The conferences were held by these superb old fighters and statesmen in an ancient thatched chapel. To make it presentable and worthy of the nobles, it was covered with tapestries which entirely hid the ruined walls. The subject of the superb pieces was a series of battles, which made the Duke of Lancaster whimsically critical of a subject ill-chosen for a peace conference, he suggesting that it were better to have represented *"la Passion de notre Seigneur."*

Not satisfied with having the meeting place a gorgeous and luxurious temple, this Philip, Duke of Burgundy, demonstrated his magnificence in his own tent, which was made of wooden planks entirely covered with "toiles peintes" (authorities state that tapestries with personages were thus described), and was in form of a château flanked with towers. As a means of pleasing the English dukes and the principal envoys, Philip gave to them superb gifts of tapestries, the beautiful tapestries of Flanders such as were made only in the territory of the duke. It is interesting to note this authentic account of the importation of certain Arras tapestries into England.

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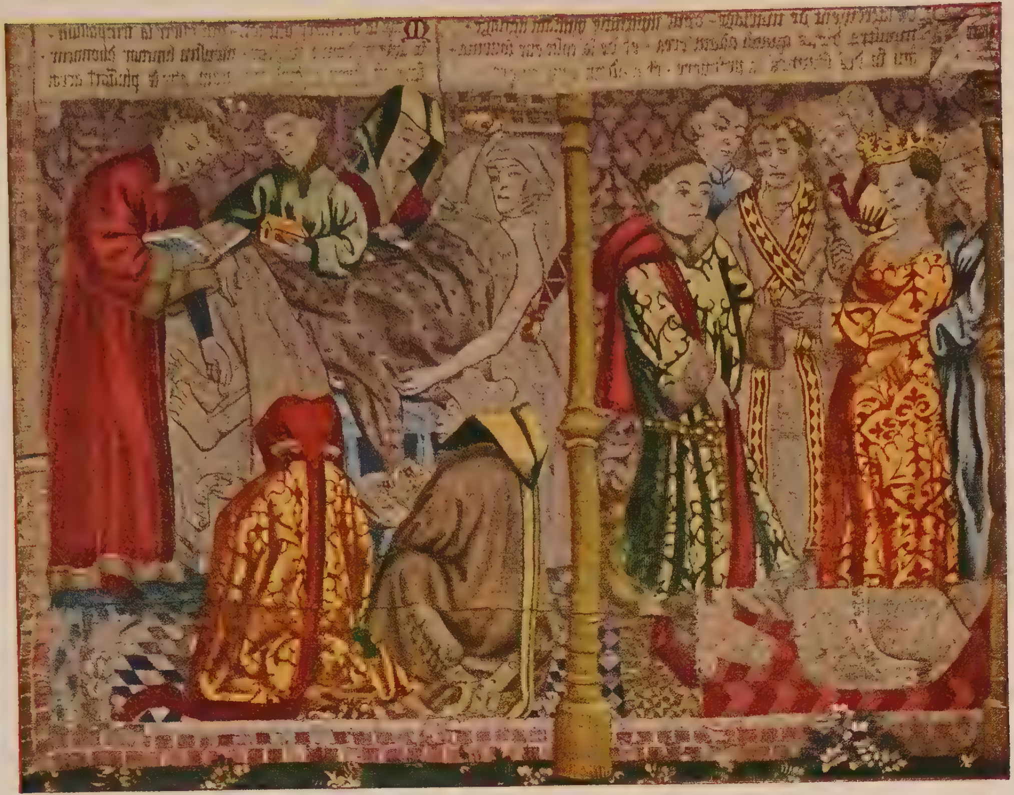
[1] M. de Barante, "Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne."

Subjects at this time introduced, besides Bible people, figures of Clovis and of Charlemagne. Two hangings represented, the one *The Seven Cardinal Vices,* with their conspicuous royal exponents in the shape of seven vicious kings and emperors; the other, *The Seven Cardinal Virtues,* with the royalties who had been their notable exponents. Here is a frank criticism on the lives of kings which smacks of latter-day democracy. All these tapestries were enriched with gold of Cyprus, as gold threads were called.

This same magnificent Philip the Hardy, had other treaties to make later on, and seeing how much his tapestries were appreciated, continued to make presents of them. One time it was the Duke of Brittany who had to be propitiated, all in the interests of peace, peace being a quality much sought and but little experienced at this time in France. Perhaps this especial Burgundian duke had a bit of self-interest in his desire for amity with the English, for he was lord of the Comité of Artois (including Arras) and this was a district which, because of its heavy commerce with England, might favour that country. A large part of that commerce was wool for tapestry weaving, wool which came from the *prés salés* of Kent, where to-day are seen the same meadows, salt with ocean spray and breezes, whereon flocks are grazing now as of old—but this time more for mutton chops than for tapestry wools.

The history of the Dukes of Burgundy, because their



THE SACRAMENTS

Arras Tapestry, about 1430. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

patronage was so stimulating to the factories of Flanders, leads us to recall the horrors of the war with Bajazet, the terrible Sultan of Turkey, and the way in which this cool monster bartered human lives for human luxuries. It was when the flower of France (1396) invaded his country and was in the power of his hand, that he had the brave company of nobles pass in review before his royal couch that he might see them mutilated to the death. Three or four only he retained alive, then sent one of these, the Sire de Helly, back to his France with *parole d'honneur* to return—to amass, first, as big a ransom as could be raised; this, if in the Turk's demanding eyes it appeared sufficient, he would accept in exchange for the remaining unhappy nobles.

Added to the money which de Helly was able to collect, were superb tapestries of Arras contributed by the Burgundian duke, Philip the Hardy. It was argued that of these luxurious hangings, Bajazet had none, for the looms of his country had not the craft to make tapestries of personages. Cloth of gold and of silver, considered an extreme elegance in France, they argued was no rarity to the terrible Turk, for it was from Damascus in his part of the world that this precious fabric came most plentifully. So de Helly took Arras tapestries into Turkey, a suite representing the history of Alexander the Great, and the avaricious monarch was persuaded by reason of this and other ransom to let his prisoners free.[1]

After the death of Philip the Hardy in 1404, his accumulated luxuries had to be sold to help pay his fabulous debts. To this end his son sold, among other things, his superb tapestries, and thus they became distributed in Paris. And yet John without Fear, who succeeded Philip, continued to stimulate the Arras weavers. In 1409 he ordered five big hangings representing his victories of Liege, all battle subjects.[1]

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[1] **Froissart, manuscript of the library of Dijon.**

Philip the Good, was the next head of the Burgundian house, and he it was who assisted in the sumptuous preparations for the entry of the king, Louis XI, into Paris. The king himself could scarcely equal in magnificence this much-jewelled duke, whose splendour was a matter of excitement to the populace. People ran to see him in the streets or to the church, to feast their eyes on his cortége, his mounted escort of a hundred knights who were themselves dukes, princes and other nobles.

His house, in the old quarter of Paris, where we are wont to wander with a Baedeker veiled, was the wonder of all who were permitted to view its interior. Here he had brought his magnificent Arras tapestries and among them the set of the *History of Gideon,* which he had had made in honour of the order of the Golden Fleece founded by him at Bruges, in 1429, for, he said, the tale of Gideon was more appropriate to the Fleece than the tale of Jason, who had not kept his trust—a bit of unconventionalism appreciable even at this distance of time.

Charles le Téméraire—the Bold or rather the foolhardy—how he used and lost his tapestries is of interest to us, because his possessions fell into a place where we can see them by taking a little trouble. Some of them

[1] De Barante, "Histoire."

are among the treasures in the museum at Nancy and at Berne in Switzerland. How they got there is in itself a matter of history, the history of a war between Burgundy and Switzerland.

Like all the line of these half-barbaric, picturesque dukes, Charles could not disassociate himself from magnificence, which in those days took the place of comfort. When making war, he endeavoured to have his camp lodgment as near as possible reproduce the elegance of his home. In his campaign against Switzerland, his tent was entirely hung with the most magnificent of tapestries. After foolhardy onslaughts on a people whose strength he miscalculated, he lost his battles, his life—and his tapestries. And this is how certain Burgundian tapestries hang in the cathedral at Berne, and in the museums at Nancy.[1]

The simple Swiss mountaineers, accustomed more to expediency than to luxury, are said to have been entirely ignorant of the value of their spoils of war. Tapestries they had never seen, nor had they the experienced eye to discern their beauties; but cloth, thick woollen cloth, that would protect shivering man from the cold, was a commodity most useful; so, many of the fine products of the high-warp looms that had augmented the pride of their noble possessor, found their way into shops and were sold to the Swiss populace in any desired length, according to bourgeois household needs, a length for a warm bed-cover, or a square for a table; and thus disappeared so many that we are thankful for the few whole hangings of that time which are ours to inspect, and which represent the best work of the day both from Arras and from Brussels, which was then (about 1476) beginning to produce.

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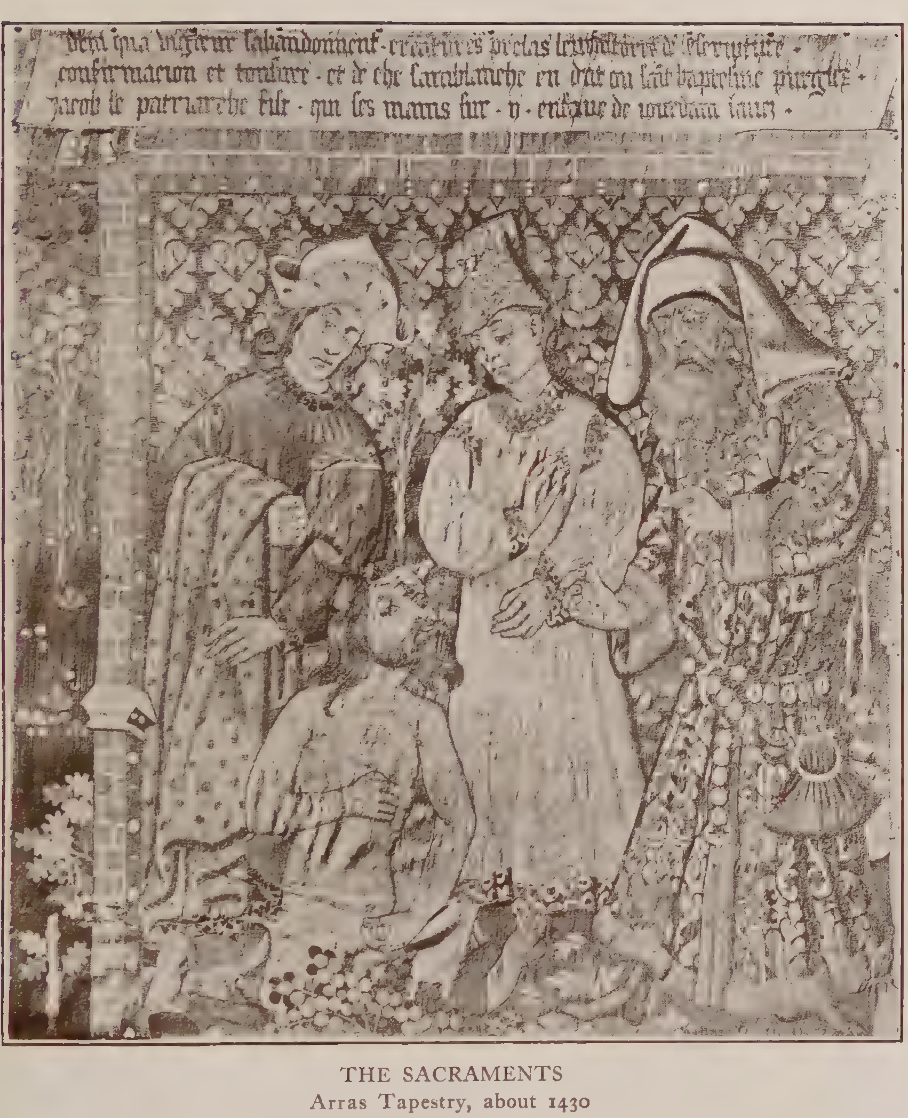
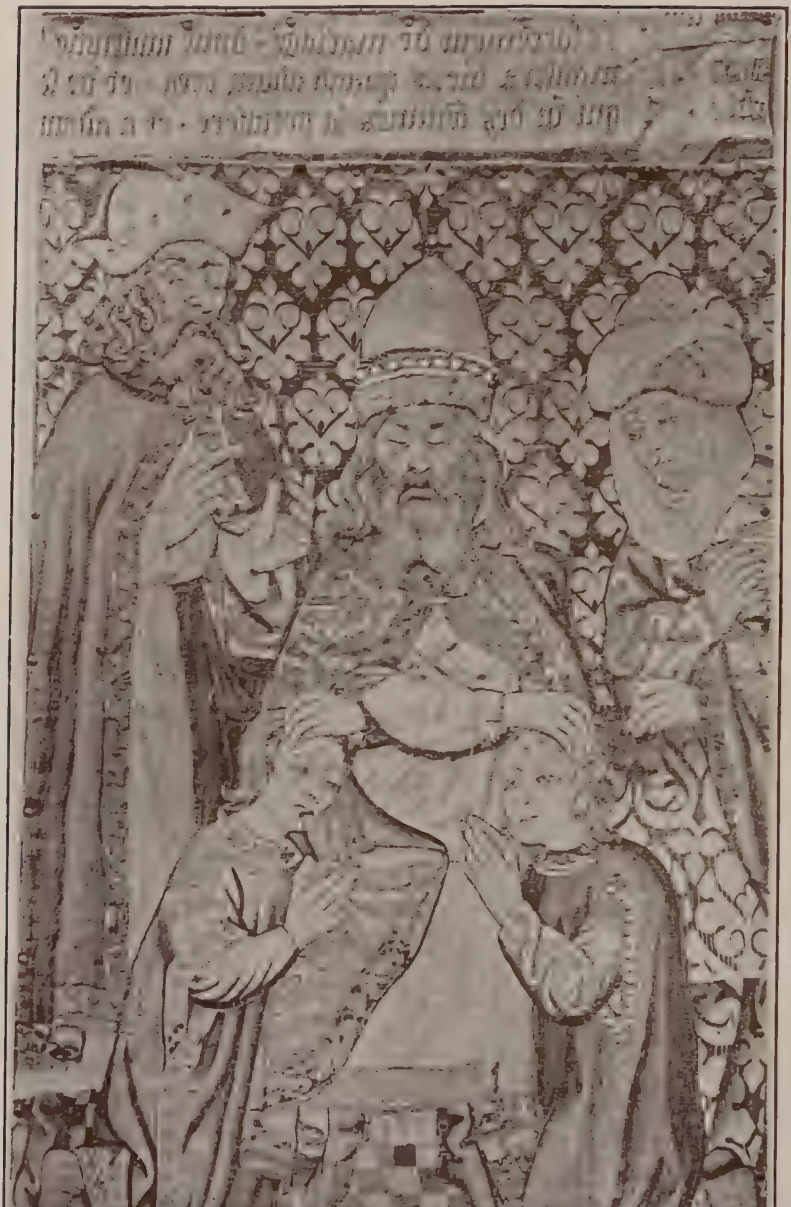
[1] See M. Pinchart, "Roger van der Weyden et les Tapisseries de Berne."

There is a special and local reason why we should be interested in the products of the high-warp tapestries in the time of the greatest power of the Dukes of Burgundy. It is that we can have the happy experience of studying, in our own country, a set of these hangings, and this without going farther than to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, where repose the set called *The Sacraments.* (Plates facing pages 34, 38 and 39.) There are in all seven pieces, although the grounds are well taken that the set originally included one more. They represent the four Sacraments of Baptism, Marriage, Confirmation and Extreme Unction, first by a series of ideal representations, then by the everyday ceremonies of the time—the time of Joan of Arc. Thus we have the early Fifteenth Century folk unveiled to us in their ideals and in their practicality. The one shows them to be religionists of a high order, the other reveals a sumptuous and elegant scale of living belonging to the nobility who made resplendent those early times.

The drawing is full of simplicity and honesty, the composition limited to a few individuals, each one having its place of importance. In this, the early work differed from the later, which multiplied figures until whole groups counted no more than individuals. The background is a field of conventionalised fleur-de-lis of so large a pattern as not to interfere with the details thrown



THE SACRAMENTS
Arras Tapestry, about 1430



THE SACRAMENTS
Arras Tapestry, about 1430

against it. Scenes are divided by slender Gothic columns, and other architectural features are tessellated floors and a sketchy sort of brick-work that appears wherever a limit-line is needed. It is the charming naïveté of its drawing that delights. Border there is none, but its lack is never felt, for the pictures are of such interest that the eye needs no barrier to keep it from wandering. Whatever border is found is a varying structure of architecture and of lettering and of the happy flowers of Gothic times which thrust their charm into all possible and impossible places.

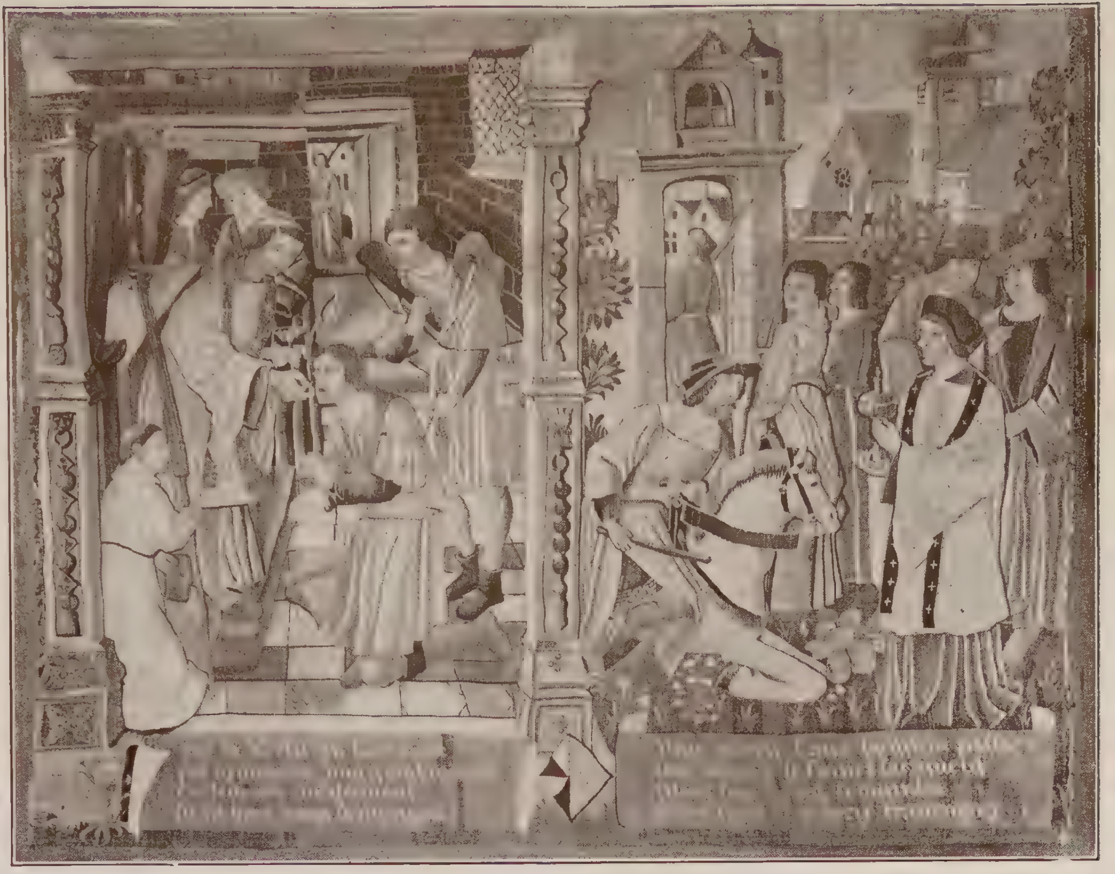
The dress, in the suite of ideals, is created by the imagining of the artist, admixed with the fashion of the day; but in scenes portraying life of the moment, we are given an interesting idea of how a bride à la mode was arrayed, in what manner a gay young lord dressed himself on his wedding morning, and how a young mother draped her proud brocade. The colouring is that of ancient stained glass, simple, rich, the gamut of colours limited, but the manner of their combining is infinite in its power to please. The conscientiousness of the ancient dyer lives after him through the centuries, and the fresh ruby-colour, the golden yellow of the large-figured brocades, glow almost as richly now as they did when the Burgundian dukes were marching up and down the land from the Mediterranean, east of France, to the coast of Flanders, carrying with them the woven pictures of their ideals, their religion and their conquests. The weave is smooth and even, speaking for the work of the tapissier or weaver, although time has distorted the faces beyond the lines of absolute beauty; and hatching accomplishes the shading.

The repairer has been at work on this valuable set, not the intelligent restorer, but the frank bungler who has not hesitated to turn certain pieces wrong side out, nor to set in large sections obviously cut from another tapestry. It is surmised that the set contained one more piece —it would be regrettable, indeed, if that missing square had been cut up for repairs.

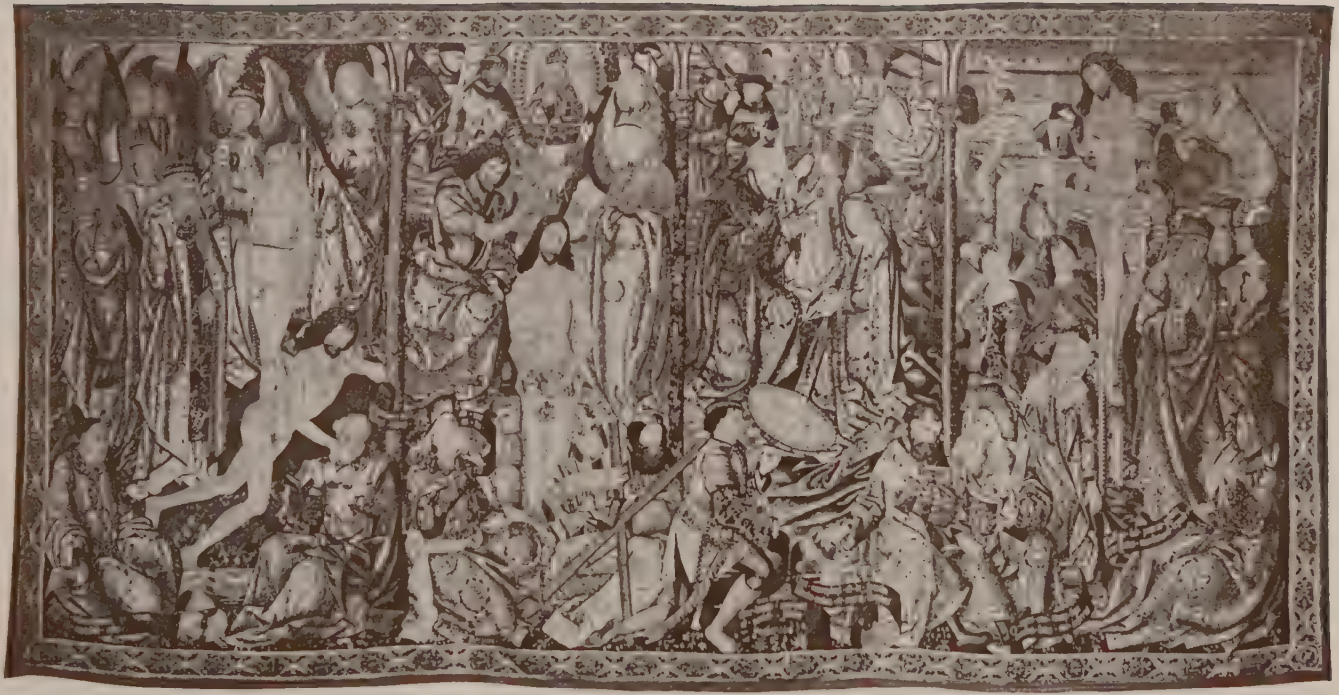
The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York owns these tapestries through the altruistic generosity of J. Pierpont Morgan, Esq. They are the most interesting primitive work which are on public view in our country, and awake to enthusiasm even the most insensate dullard, who has a half hour to stand before them and realise all they mean in art, in morals and in history.

To the lives of the Prophets and Saints we can always turn; from the romance of men and women we can never turn away. And so when a Gothic tapestry is found that frankly omits Biblical folk and gives us a true picture of men and women of the almost impenetrable time back of the fifteen hundreds, tells us what they wore, in what manner they comported themselves, that tapestry has a sure and peculiar value. The surviving art of the Middle Ages smacks strong of saints, paints at full length the people of Moses' time, but unhappily gives only a bust of their contemporaries.

Hangings portraying secular subjects were less often woven than those of religion and morals, but also the former have less lustily outlived the centuries, owing to



FIFTEENTH CENTURY FRENCH TAPESTRY
Boston Museum of Fine Arts



THE LIFE OF CHRIST
Flemish Tapestry, second half of Fifteenth Century. Boston Museum of Fine Arts

the habit of tearing them from the suspending hooks and packing them about from château to château, to soften surroundings for the wandering visitor. Thus it comes that we have little tapestried record of a time when knights and ladies and ill-assorted attributes walked hand in hand, a time of chivalry and cruelty, of roses and war, of sumptuousness and crudity, of privation and indulgence, of simplicity and deceit.

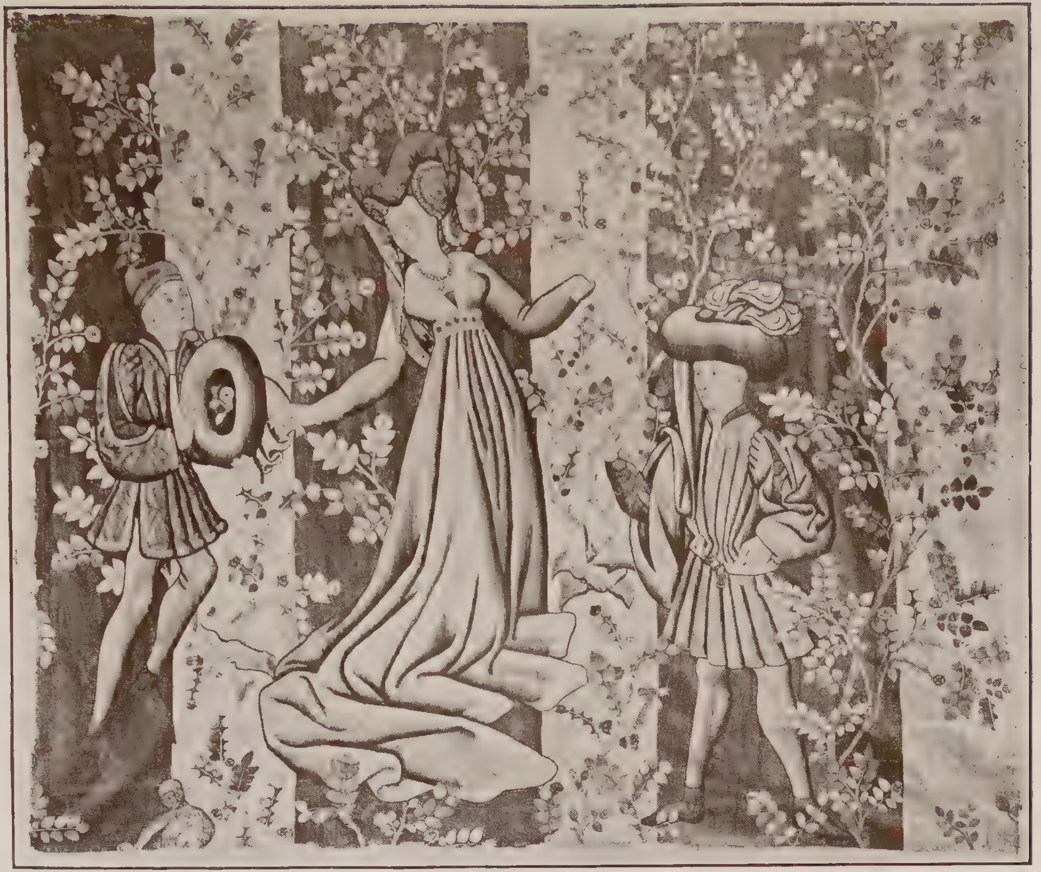
If prowling among old books has tempted the hand to take from the shelves one of those quaint luxuries known as a "Book of Hours," there before the eye lies the spirit of that age in decoration and design. There, too, lies much of the old spirit of morality—that, whether genuine or affected, was bound to be expressed. Morality had a vogue in those days, was a *sine qua non* of fashion. That famous amateur Jean, duc de Berry, uncle of Charles VI of France, had such a book, "Les Très Riches Heures"; one was possessed by that gifted Milanese lady whom Ludovico Sforza put out of the line of Lombardy's throne. The wonderful Gothic ingenuousness lies in their careful paintings, the ingenuousness where virtue is expressed by beauty, and vice by ugliness, and where, with delightful seriousness, standing figures overtop the houses they occupy—the same people, the same battlements, we have seen on the early tapestries. Weavers must surely have consulted the lovely books of Gothic miniature, so like is the spirit of the designs to that in the Gothic fabrics.

"The beauties of Agnes Sorel were represented on the wool," says Jubinal, "and she herself gave a superb and magnificent tapestry to the church at Loches," but this quaint student is doubtful if the lovely *amante du roi* actually gave the tapestries that set forth her own beauties, which beauty all can see in the quiet marble as she lies sleeping with her spaniel curled up at her lovely feet in the big château on the Loire.

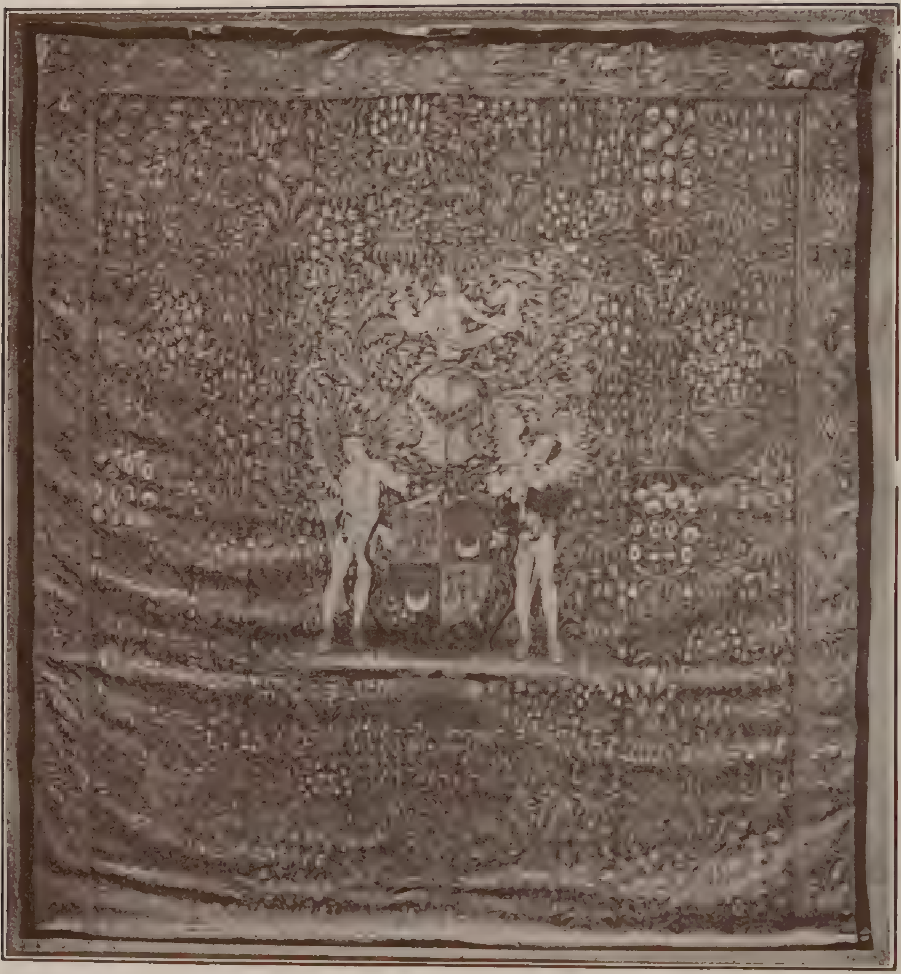
By means of a rare set bought by the Rogers Fund for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, we can see, if not the actual tapestries of fair Agnes Sorel, at least those of the same epoch and manner. This set is called *The Baillée des Roses* and comprises three pieces, fragments one is inclined to call them, seeing the mutilations of the ages. (Plate facing page 42.) They were woven probably before 1450, probably in France, undoubtedly from French drawings, for the hand and eye of the artist were evidently under the influence of the celebrated miniaturist, Jean Fouquet of Tours. Childlike is the charm of this careful artist of olden times, childlike is his simplicity, his honesty, his care to retain the fundamental virtues of a good little boy who lives to the tune of Eternal Verities.

These three tapestries of the Roses illustrate so well so many things characteristic of their day, that it is not time lost to study them with an eye to all their points. There is the weave, the wool, the introduction of metal threads, the colour scale; all these besides the design and the story it tells.

The tapestries represent a custom of France in the time when Charles VII, the Indolent (and likewise through Jeanne d'Arc, the victorious) had as his favourite the fascinating Agnes Sorel. During the late spring, when



LA BAILLEE DES ROSES
French Tapestry, about 1450. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



FIFTEENTH CENTURY MILLEFLEUR WITH ARMS
Cathedral of Troyes

the roses of France are in fullest flower, various peers of France had as political duty to present to each member of the Parliament a rose when the members answered in response to roll call.

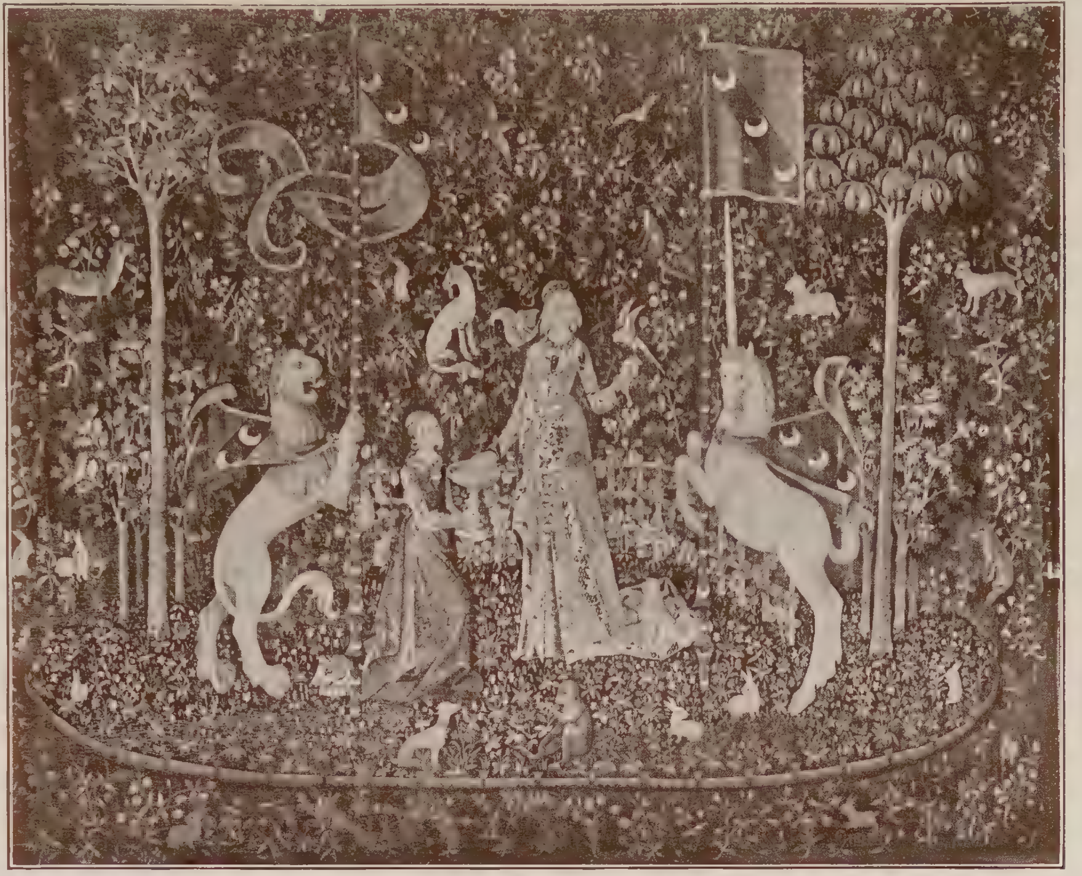
The great chamber where the body met was for the occasion transformed into a bower; vines and sprays of roses covered all the grim walls, as the straying vines in the tapestry reveal. The host of the day, who might be a foreign prince or cardinal, or one of the "children of France," began the day with giving a great breakfast which took place in the several chambers. During the feast the noble host paid a courtly visit to each chamber, accompanied by a servitor who bore a huge salver on which were the flowers and souvenirs to be presented. The air was sweet with blossoms and pungent herbs, music penetrated from the halls outside as the man of conspicuous elegance played mock humility and served all with the dainty tribute of a fragrant tender rose. This part of the ceremony over, the company moved on to the great audience chamber, where mass was said.

Our tapestries show the figures of ladies and gentlemen present at this pretty ceremony—too pretty to associate with desperate Jeanne d'Arc, who at that very time was rousing France to war to throw off the foreign yoke. The ladies fair and masters bold are intensely human little people, for the most part paired off in couples as men and women have been wont to pair in gardens since Eden's time. They are dressed in their best, that is evident, and by their distant, courteous manners show good society. The faces of the ladies are childlike, dutiful;

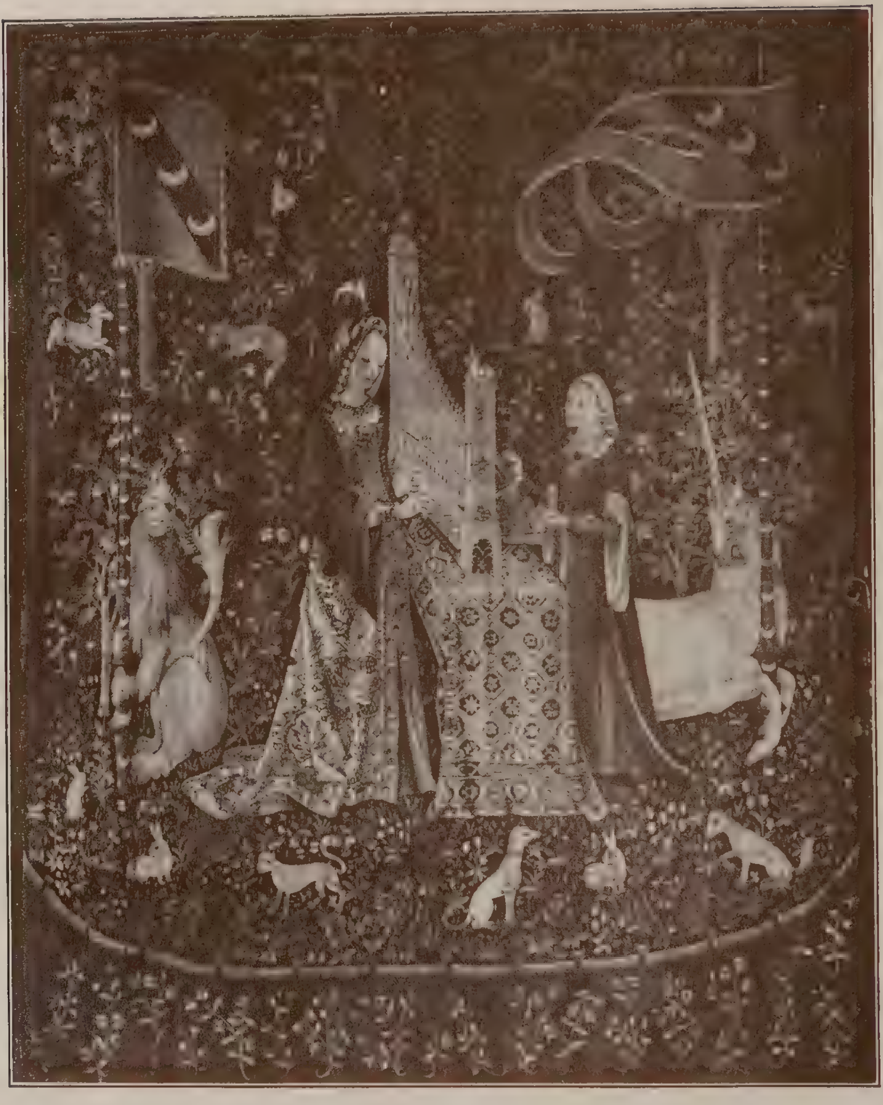
those of the men more determined, after the manner of men.

But the interest of the set centres in the tableau wherein are but three figures, those of two men and a woman. Here lies a piquant romance. Who is she, the grand and gracious lady, bending like a lily stalk among the roses, with a man on either side? A token is being exchanged between her and the supplicant at her right. He, wholly elegant, half afraid, bends the knee and fixes her with a regard into which his whole soul is thrown. She, fair lady, is inclining, yet withdrawing, eyes of fear and modesty cast down. Yet whatever of temerity the faces tell, the hands are carrying out a comedy. Hid in the shadow of a copious hat, which the gentleman extends, lurks a rose; proffered by the lady's hand is a token—fair exchange, indeed, of lover's symbols—provided the strong, hard man to the left of the lady has himself no right of command over her and her favours. Thus might one dream on forever over history's sweets and romance's gallantries.

It is across the sea, in the sympathetic Museum of Cluny that the beauty of early French work is exquisitely demonstrated. The set of *The Lady and the Unicorn* is one of infinite charm. (Plates facing pages 44 and 45.) In its enchanted wood lives a noble lady tall and fair, lithe, young and elegant, with attendant maid and two faithful, fabulous beasts that uphold the standards of maidenhood. A simple circle denotes the boundary of the enchanted land wherein she dwells, a park with noble trees and lovely flowers, among which disport the little



THE LADY AND THE UNICORN
French Tapestry, Fifteenth Century. Musée de Cluny, Paris



THE LADY AND THE UNICORN
French Tapestry, Fifteenth Century. Musée de Cluny, Paris

animals that associate themselves with mankind. For four centuries these hangings have delighted the eye of man, and are perhaps more than ever appreciated now. Certain it is that the art student's easel is often set before them for copying the quaint design and soft colour.

As the early worker in wools could not forget the beauties of earth, the foreground of many Gothic tapestries is sprinkled with the loved common flowers of every day, of the field and wood. This is one of the charming touches in early tapestry, these little flowers that thrust themselves with captivating inappropriateness into every sort of scene. The grave and awesome figures in the *Apocalypse* find them at their feet, and in scenes of battle they adorn the sanguinary sod and twinkle between fierce combatants.

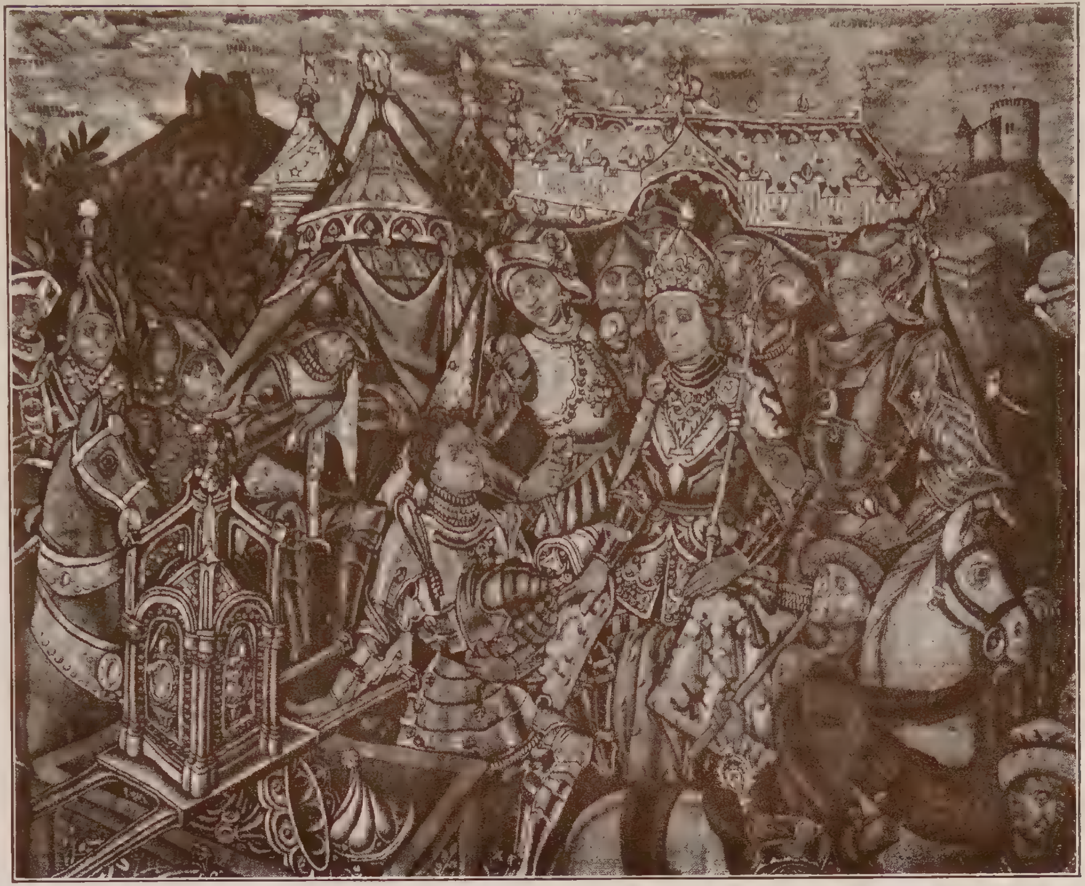
Occasionally a weaver goes mad about them and refuses to produce anything else but lily-bells newly sprung in June, cowslips and daisies pied, rosemary and rue, and all these in decorous courtesy on a deep, dark background like twilight on a bank or moonlight in a dell—and lo, we have the marvellous bit of nature-painting called *millefleurs.*

A Burgundian tapestry that has come to this country to add to our increasing riches, is the large hanging known as *The Sack of Jerusalem.* (Plate facing page 46.) Almost more than any other it revivifies the ancient times of Philip the Hardy, John without Fear, and Charles the Bold, when these dukes, who were monarchs in all but name, were leading lives that make our own Twentieth Century fretting seem but the unrest of aspens. Such hangings as this, *The Sack of Jerusalem,* were those that the great Burgundian dukes had hung about their tents in battle, their castles in peace, their façades and bridges in fêtes.

The subject chosen hints religion, but shouts bloodshed and battle. Those who like to feel the texture of old tapestries would find this soft and pliable, and in wondrous state of preservation. Its colours are warm and fresh, adhering to red-browns and brown-reds and a general mellow tone differing from the sharp stained-glass contrasts noticed in *The Sacraments.* Costumes show a naïve compromise between those the artist knew in his own time and those he guessed to appertain to the year of our Lord 70, when the scene depicted was actually occurring. The tapestry resembles in many ways the famous tapestries of the Duke of Devonshire which are known as the Hardwick Hall tapestries. In drawing it is similar, in massing, in the placing of spots of interest. This large hanging is a part of the collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

The Boston Museum of Fine Arts exhibits a primitive hanging which is probably woven in France, Northern France, at the end of the Fifteenth Century. (Plate facing page 40.) It represents, in two panels, the power of the church to drive out demons and to confound the heathen. Fault can be found with its crudity of drawing and weave, but tapestries of this epoch can hold a position of interest in spite of faults.

A fine piece at the same museum is the long, narrow



THE SACK OF JERUSALEM (DETAIL)
Burgundian Tapestry, about 1450. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

hanging representing scenes from the life of Christ, with a scene from Paradise to start the drama. (Plate facing page 41.) This tapestry, which is of great beauty, is subdivided into four panels by slender columns suggesting a springing arch which the cloth was too low to carry. All the pretty Gothic signs are here. The simple flowers upspringing, the Gothic lettering, the panelling, and a narrow border of such design as suggests rose-windows or other lace-like carving. Here is noticeable, too, the sumptuous brocades in figures far too large for the human form to wear, figures which diminished greatly a very few decades later.

The Institute of Art, Chicago, possesses an interesting piece of the period showing another treatment of a similar subject. (Plate facing page 48.) In this the columns are omitted, the planes are increased, and there is an entire absence of the triptych or altar-piece style of drawing which we associate with the primitive artists in painting.

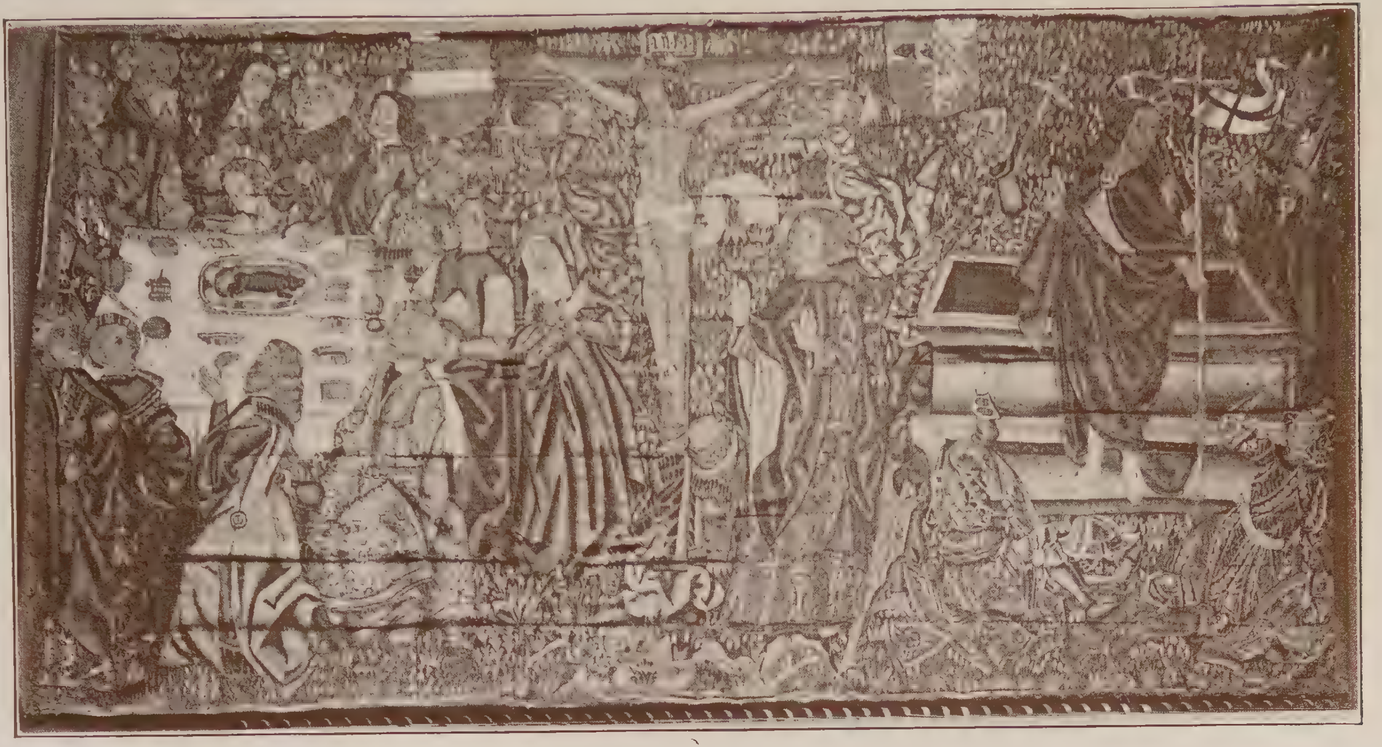
We have seen in this slight review that Paris was in a fair way to cover the castle walls and floors of noble lords with her high loom and *sarrazinois* products, when the English occupation ruined the prosperity of the weaver's guild. Arras supplied the enormous demand for tapestries through Europe, and made a lasting fame. But this little city, too, had to go down before the hard conditions of the Conqueror. Louis XI, in 1477, possessed himself of the town after the death of the last-famed Burgundian duke, Charles the Bold, and under his eccentric persecutions the guild of weavers scattered. He saw too late his mistake. But other towns benefited by it, towns whither the tapissiers fled with their art.

There had also been much trouble between the last Duke of Burgundy and his Flemish cities. His extravagances and expeditions led him to make extraordinary demands upon one town and another for funds, and even to make war upon them, as at Liége, the battles of which conflict were perpetuated in tapestries. Let us trust that no Liégois weaver was forced to the humiliation of weaving this set.

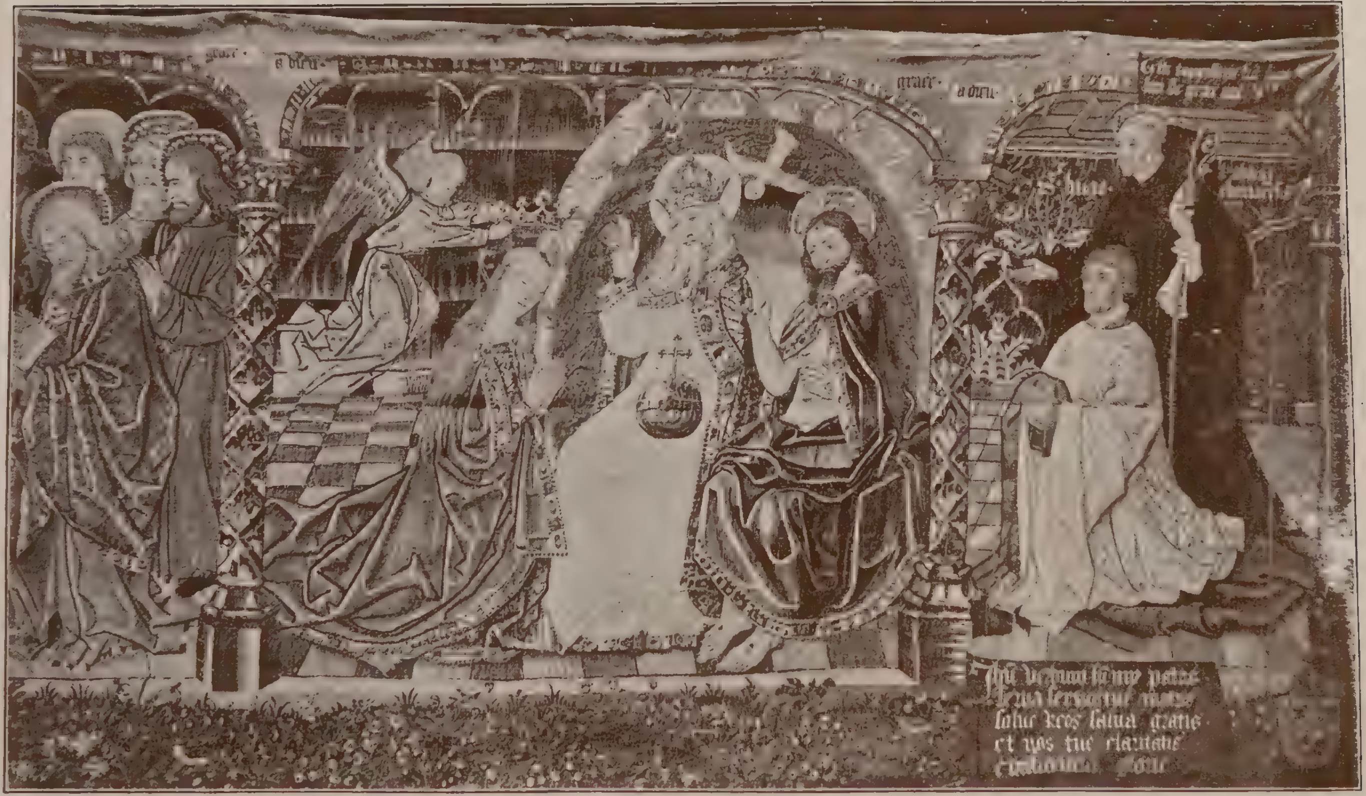
This disposition to work to his own ultimate undoing was encouraged in the duke, wherever possible, by the crafty Louis XI, who had his own reasons for wishing the downfall of so powerful a neighbour. And thus it came that Arras, the great tapestry centre, was at first weakened, then destroyed by the capture of the town by Louis XI immediately after the tragic death of the duke in 1477.

Thus everything was favourable to the Brussels factories, which began to produce those marvels of workmanship that force from the world the sincerest admiration. It is frankly asserted that toward the end of the century, or more accurately, during the reigns of Charles VIII and Louis XII (1483–1515), tapestry attained a degree of perfection which has never been surpassed.

We have a very clear idea of what use to make of tapestries in these days—to hang them in a part of the house where they will be much seen and much protected, on an important wall-space where their figures become the



SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF CHRIST, WITH ARMORIAL SHIELDS
Flemish Tapestry, Fifteenth Century. Institute of Art, Chicago



HISTORY OF THE VIRGIN
Angers Cathedral

friend of daily life, or the bosky shades of their verdure invite to revery. They are extended flat against the wall, or even framed, that not one stroke of the artist's pencil or one flash of the weaver's shuttle be hid. But, many were their uses and grand were their purposes in the days when high-warp and low-warp weaving was the important industry of whole provinces. Palaces and castles were hung with them, but apart from this was the sumptuous use of a reserve of hangings for outdoor fêtes and celebrations of all sorts. These were the great opportunities for all to exhibit their possessions and to make a street look almost as elegant and habitable as the grandest chamber of the king.

On the occasion of the entry of a certain queen into Paris, all the way from Porte St. Denis to the Cathedral of Notre Dame was hung with such specimens of the weaver's art as would make the heart of the modern amateur throb wildly. They were hung from windows, draped across the fronts of the houses, and fluttered their bright colours in the face of an illuminating sun that yet had no power to fade the conscientious work of the craftsman. The high lights of silk in the weave, and the enrichment of gold and silver in the pattern caught and held the sunbeams. In all the cavalcade of mounted knights and ladies, there was the flashing of arms, the gleam of jewelled bridles, the flaunting of rich stuffs, all with a background of unsurpassed blending of colour and texture. The bridge over the Seine leading to Notre Dame, its ramparts were entirely concealed, its asperities softened, by the tapestries which hung over its sides, making the passage over the river like the approach to a throne, the luxury of kings combined with the beauty of the flowing river, the blue sky, the tender green of the trees.

Indeed, it was so lovely a sight that the king himself was not content to see it from his honoured but restricted post, but needs must doff his crown—monarchs wore them in those fairy days—and fling a leg over a gentleman's charger, behind its owner, and thus ride double to see the sights. So great was his eagerness to enjoy all the display that he got a smart reproof from an officer of ceremonies for trespassing.[1]

When Louis XI was the young king, and had not yet developed the taste for bloodshed and torture that as a crafty fox he used later to the horror of his nation, he, too, had similar festivals with similar decorations. On one occasion the Pont des Changes was made the chief point in the royal progress through the streets of Paris. The bridge was hung with superb tapestries of great size, from end to end, and the king rode to it on a white charger, his trappings set with turquoise, with a gorgeous canopy supported over his head. Just as he reached the bridge the air became full of the music of singing birds, twenty-five hundred of them at that moment released, and all fluttering, darting, singing amid the gorgeous scene to tickle the fancy of a king.

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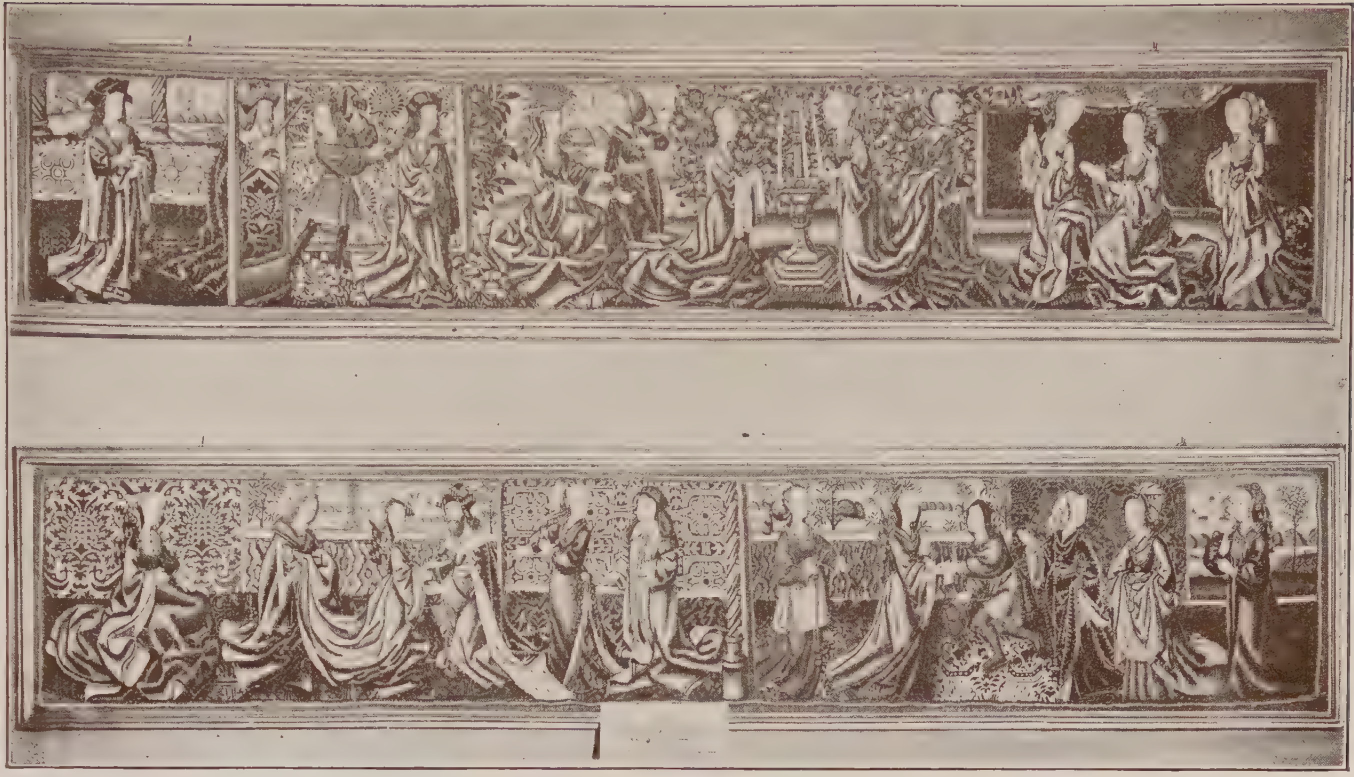
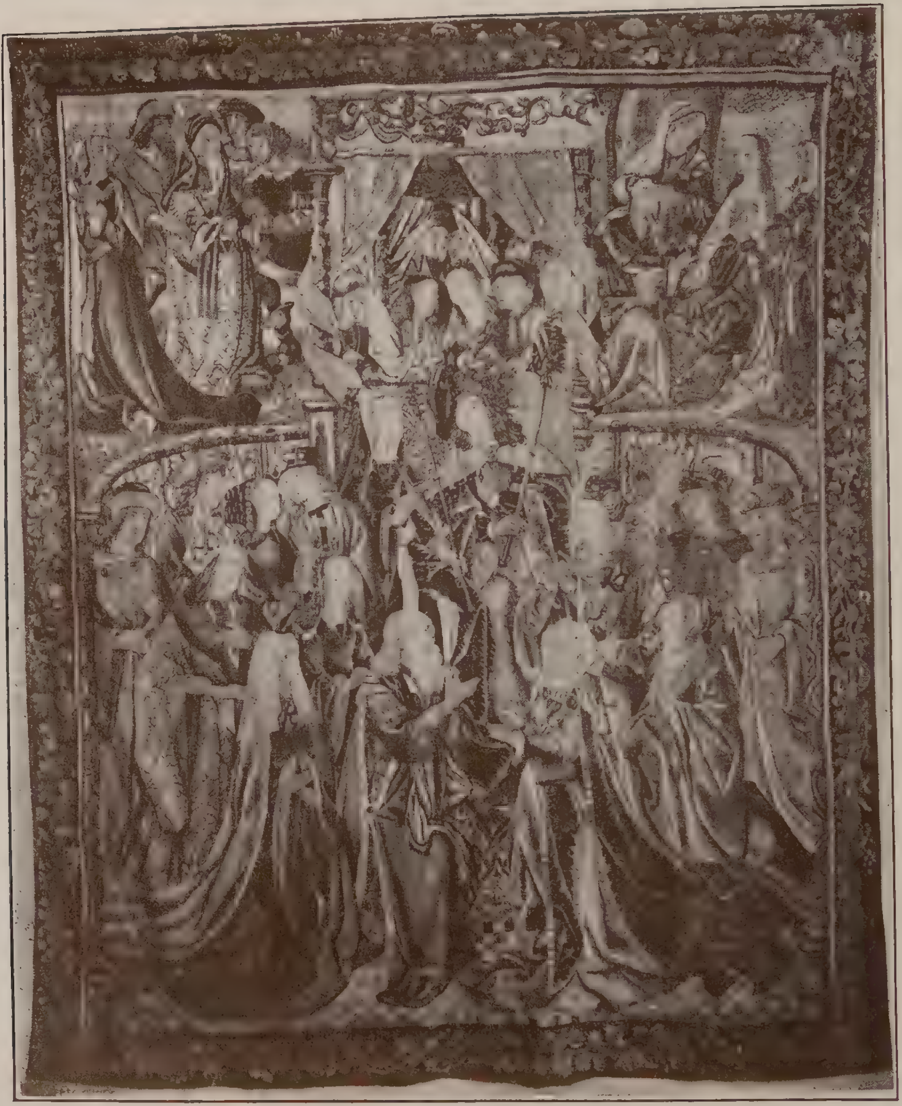
[1] Enguerrand de Monstrelet, "Chronicles."



DAVID AND BATHSHEBA
German Tapestry, about 1450



FLEMISH TAPESTRY. ABOUT 1500
Collection of Alfred W. Hoyt, Esq.

CHAPTER V

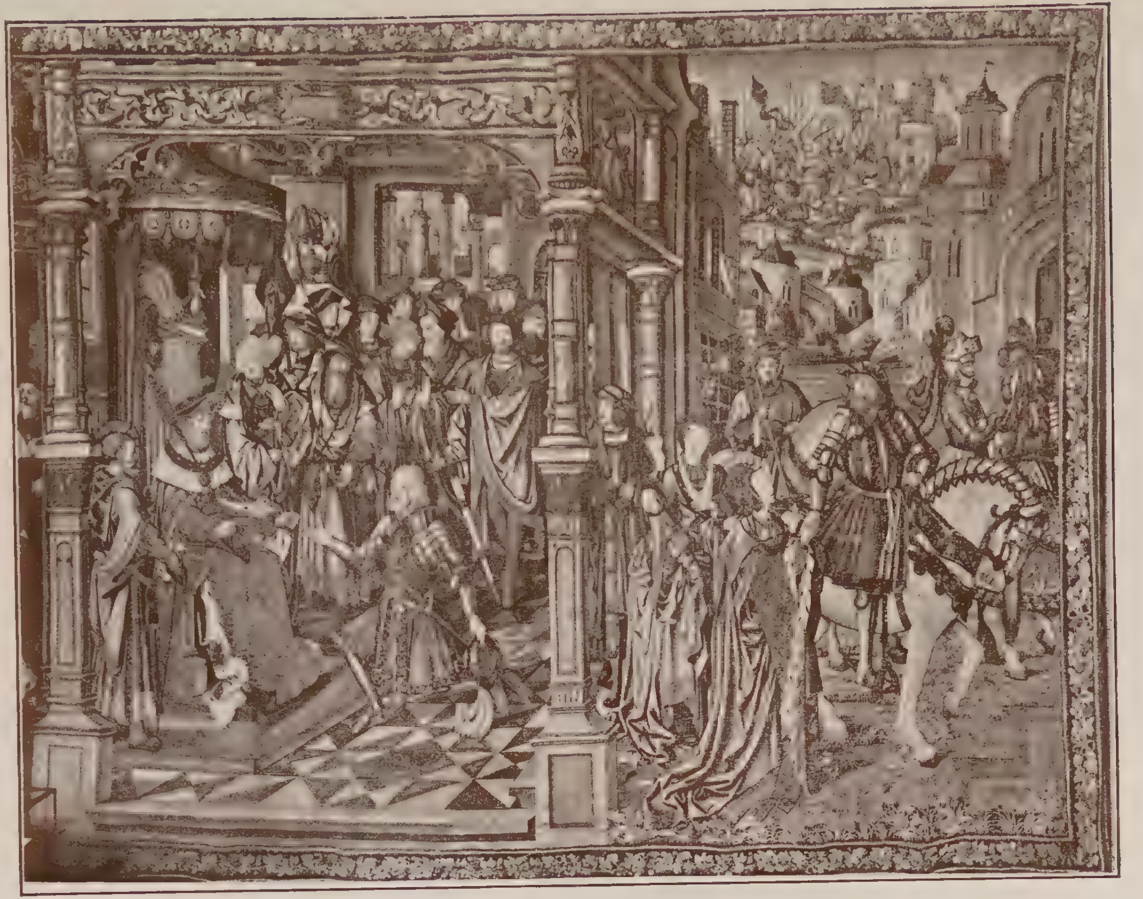
HIGH GOTHIC

THE wonderful time of the Burgundian dukes is gone; Charles le Téméraire leaves the world at Nancy, where the pitying have set up a cross in memory of his unkingly death, and where the lover of things Gothic may wander down a certain way to the exquisite portico of the Ducal Palace and, entering, find the Gothic room where the duke's precious tapestries are hung. In this sympathetic atmosphere one may dream away hours in sheer joy of association with these shadowy hosts of the past, the relentless slayers in the battle scenes, relentless moralists in the religious subjects—for morality plays had a parallel in the morality tapestry, issuing such rigid warnings to those who make merry as is seen in *The Condemnation of Suppers and Banquets, The Reward of Virtue, The Triumph of Right, The Horrors of the Seven Deadly Sins,* all of which were popular subjects for the weaver.

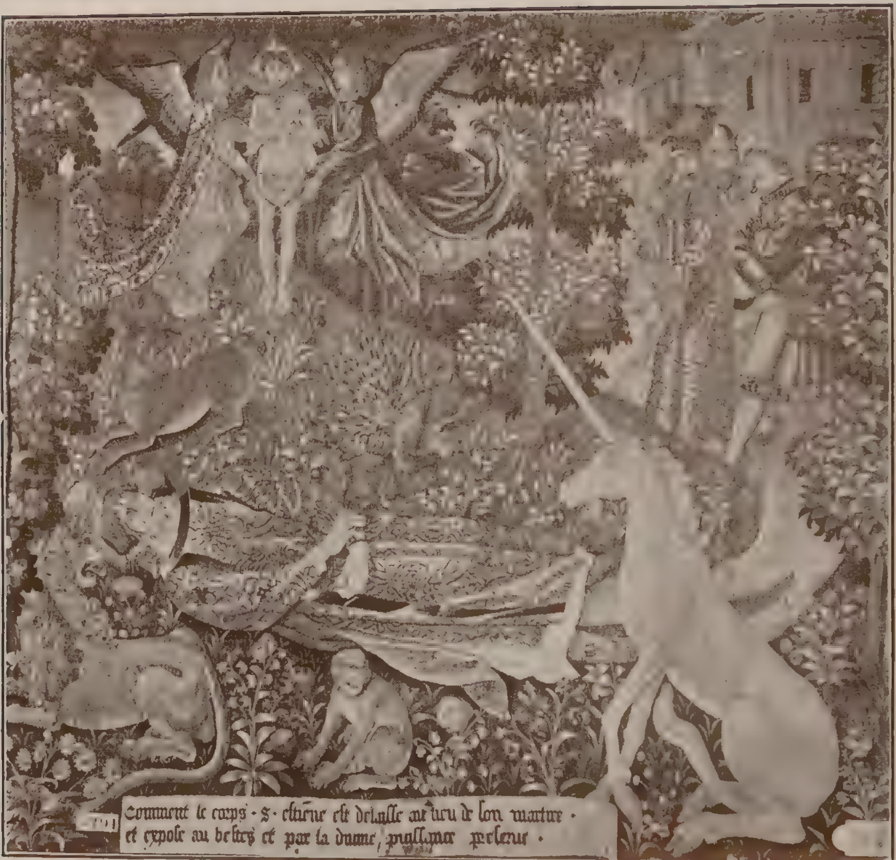
With the artists who might be called primitives we have almost finished in the end of the Fifteenth Century. The simplicity of the very early weavers passed. They were content with comparatively few figures, and these so strongly treated that in composition one scarce took on more importance than another. When Arras and other Flemish towns, as well as Paris and certain French towns, developed the industry and employed more ambitious artists, the designs became more crowded, and the tendency was to multiply figures in an effort to crowd as many as possible into the space. When architecture appeared in the design, towers and battlements were crowded with peeping heads in delightful lack of proportion, and forests of spears springing from platoons of soldiers, filled almost the entire height of the cloth. The naïve fashion still existed of dressing the characters of an ancient Biblical or classic drama in costumes which were the mode of the weaver's time, disregarding the epoch in which the characters actually lived.

An adherence to the childlike drawing of the early workers continues noticeable in their quaint way of putting many scenes on one tapestry. Interiors are readily managed, by dividing—as in *The Sacraments* set in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York—with slender Gothic columns, than which nothing could be prettier, especially when framed in at the top with the Gothic arch. In outdoor scenes the frank disregard of the probable adds the charm of audacity. Side by side with a scene of carnage, a field of blood with victims lying prone, is inserted an island of flowers whereon youths and dogs are pleasantly sporting; and adjoining that may be another section cunningly introduced where a martyred woman is enveloped in flames which spring from the ground around her as naturally as grass in springtime.

And flowers, flowers everywhere. Those little blossoms of the Gothic with their perennial beauty, they are one of the smiles of that far time that shed cheer through



DAVID AND BATHSHEBA
Flemish Tapestry, late Fifteenth Century


Comment le corps · s · eſtiēne eſt delaiſſe au lieu de ſon martire ·
et expoſe au beſtes et par la diuine puiſſance preſerue ·

HISTORY OF ST. STEPHEN
Arras Tapestry, Fifteenth Century

the centuries. They are not the grandiose affairs of the Renaissance whose voluptuous development contains the arrogant assurance of beauty matured. They do not crown a column or trail themselves in foliated scrolls; but are just as Nature meant them to be, unaffected bits of colour and grace, upspringing from the sod. In the cathedral at Berne is a happy example of the use of these sweet flowers, as they appear at the feet of the sacred group, and as they carry the eye into the sky by means of the feathery branches like fern-fronds which tops the scene; but we find them nearer home, in almost every Gothic tapestry.

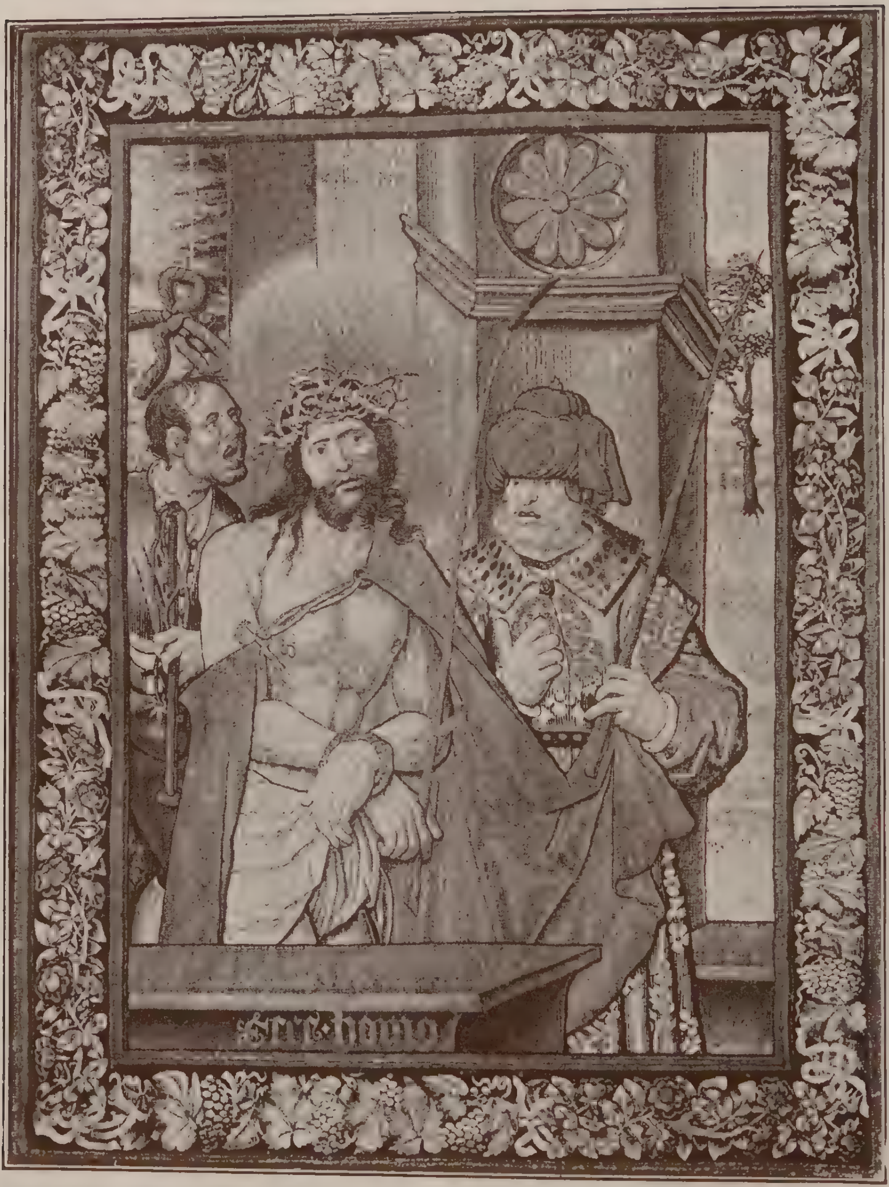
It was about the end of the last Crusade when Italy began to produce the inspired artists who broke the bonds of Byzantine traditions and turned back to the inspiration of all art, which is Nature. Giotto, tending his sheep, began to draw pictures of things as he saw them, Savonarola awoke the conscience, Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio—a string of names to conjure with—all roused the intellect. The dawn of the Renaissance flushed Europe with the life of civilisation. But before the wonderful development of art through the reversion to classic lines, came a high perfection of the style called Gothic, and with that we are pleased to deal first. It is so full of beauty to the eye and interest to the intellect that sometimes we must be dragged away from it to regard the softer lines of later art, with the ingratitude and reluctance of childhood when torn from its fairy tales to read of real people in the commonplace of every day.

We are now in the time when the perfection of production was reached in the tapestries we call Gothic. Artists had grown more certain of their touch in colour and design, and weavers worked with such conscientious care as is now almost unknown, and produced a quality of tapestry superior to that of their forebears. The Fifteenth Century and the first few years of the Sixteenth were spent in perfecting the style of the preceding century, and so great was the perfection reached, that it was impossible to develop further on those lines.

It must not be supposed from their importance that Brussels and Bruges were the sole towns of weavers. There were many high-warp looms, and low-warp as well, in many towns in Flanders and France, and there were also beginnings in Spain, England and Germany. Italy came later. The superb set in the Cluny Museum in Paris, *The Lady and the Unicorn,* than which nothing could be lovelier in poetic feeling as well as in technique, is accorded to French looms. But as it is impossible in a cursory survey to mention all, the two most important cities are dwelt upon because it is from them that the greatest amount of the best product emanated.

Tapestries could not well decline with the fortunes of a town, for they were a heavy article of commerce at the time when Louis XI attacked Arras. Trade was made across the Channel, whence came the best wool for their manufacture; they were bought by the French monarchs and nobility; many drifted to Genoa and Italy, to be sold by the active merchants of the times to whoever could buy. When, therefore, Arras was crushed, her able workmen flew to other centres of production, principally

VERDURE
French Gothic Tapestry



"ECCE HOMO"
Brussels Tapestry, about 1520. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

in Flanders, notably to Bruges and Brussels, and helped to bring these places into their high position.

Stories of kings and their magnificence breathe ever of romance, but kings could not be magnificent were it not for the labour of the conscientious common people, those who go daily to their task, asking nothing better than to live their little span in humble endeavour. The weavers, the tapissiers of that far-away time in Flanders are intensely appealing now when their beautiful work hangs before us to-day. They send us a friendly message down through the centuries. It is this makes us inquire a bit into the conditions of their lives, and so we find them scattered through the country north of France working with single-hearted devotion toward the perfection of their art. That they arrived there, we know by such tapestries as are left us of their time.

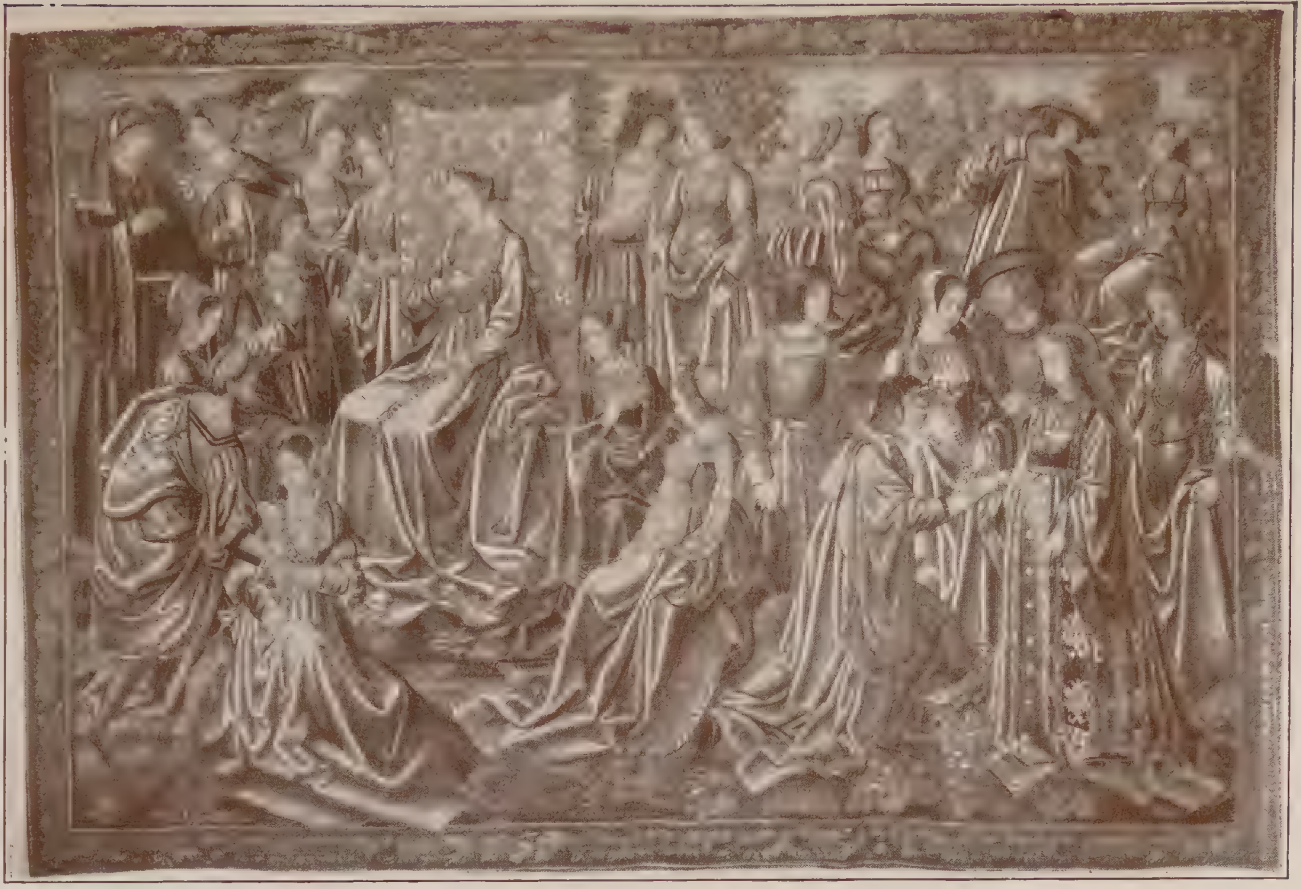
Bruges was the home of a movement in art similar to that occurring in Italy. Old traditions of painting were being thrown aside—the revolution even attacking the painter's medium, tempera, which was criticised, discarded and replaced by oil on the palettes. Memling, the brothers Van Eyck, were painting things as they saw them, not as rules prescribed. Bernard Van Orley was at work with bold originality.

It were strange if this Northern school of painters had not influenced all art near by. It is to these men that Brussels owes the beauty of her tapestries in that apogee of Gothic art which immediately preceded the introduction of the Renaissance from Italy.

Cartoons or drawings for tapestries took on the rules of composition of these talented and original men. Easily distinguishable is the strong influence of the religious feeling, the fidelity to standards of the church. When a rich townsman wished to express his praise or gratitude to God, he ordered for the church an altar-piece or dainty gilded Gothic carving to frame the painted panels of careful execution. When Jean de Rome executed a cartoon, he treated it in much the same way; built up an airy Gothic structure and filled the spaces with pretty pictures. The so-called Mazarin tapestry of Mr. Morgan's shows this treatment at its best. Unhappily, the atelier of Jean de Rome or Jan von Room is too sketchily portrayed in the book of the past; its records are faint and elusive. We only hear now and then an interested allusion, a suggestion that this or that beautiful specimen of work has come from his atelier.

Cartoons at the beginning of the Sixteenth Century were not all divided into their different scenes by Gothic column and arch. In much of the fine work there was no division except a natural one, for the picture began to develop the modern scheme of treating but one scene in one picture. Although this might be filled with many groups, yet all formed a harmonious whole. The practice then fell into disuse of repeating the same individual many times in one picture.

A good example of the change and improvement in drawing which assisted in making Brussels' supremacy and in bringing Gothic art to perfection, is the fine hanging in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. (Plate facing page 57.) It depicts with beautiful naïveté and



ALLEGORICAL SUBJECT
Flemish Tapestry, about 1500. Collection of Alfred W. Hoyt, Esq.

CROSSING THE RED SEA

Brussels Tapestry, about 1500. Boston Museum of Fine Arts much realism the discomfiture of Pharaoh and his army floundering in the Red Sea, while the serene and elegant children of Israel contemplate their distress with well-bred calm from the flowery banks of an orderly park.

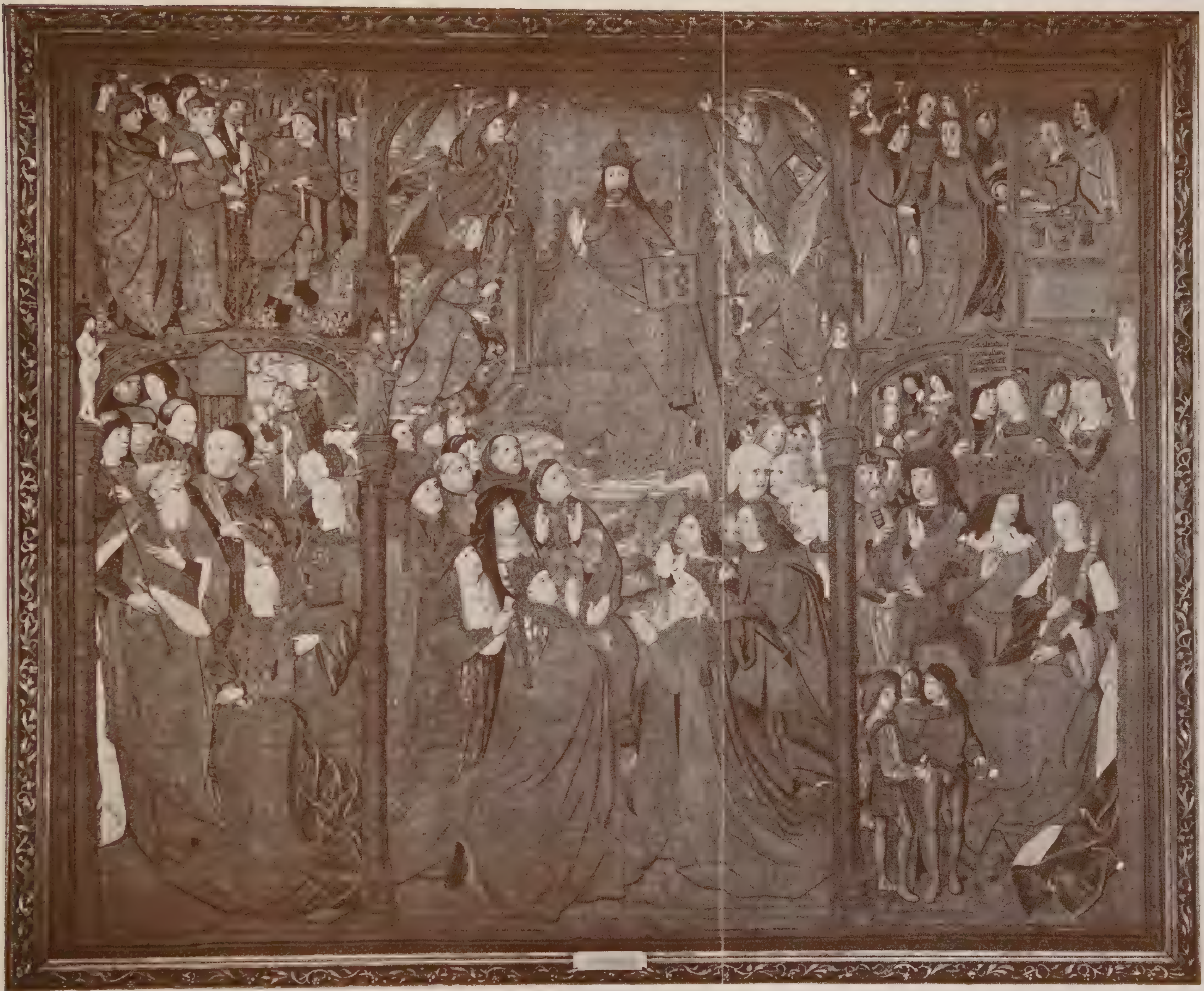
This tapestry illustrates so many of the important features of work during the first period of Brussels' supremacy that it is to be lingered over, dissected and tasted like a dessert of nuts and wine. Should one speak first of the cartoon or of the weave, of the artist or of the craftsmen? If it is to be the tapissier, then to him all credit, for in this and similar work he has reached a care in execution and a talent in translation that are inspired. Such quantity of detail, so many human faces with their varying expressions, could only be woven by the most adroit tapissier.

The drawing shows, first, one scene of many groups but a sole interest, with none but probable divisions. Much grace and freedom is shown in the attitudes of the persons on the shore, and strenuous effort and despair among the engulfed soldiers. Extreme attention to detail, the making one part as finished as another, even to the least detail, is noticeable. The exaggerated patterns of the stuffs observable in earlier work is absent, and a sense of proportion is displayed in dress ornament. The free movement of men and beasts, and the variety of facial expression all show the immense strides made in drawing and the perfection attained in this brilliant period.

It was a time when the artist perfected the old style and presaged the new, the years before the Renaissance had left its cradle and marched over Europe. This perfection of the Gothic ideal has a purity and simplicity that can never fail to appeal to all who feel that sincerity is the basic principle of art as it is of character. The style of Quentin Matsys, of the Van Eycks, was the mode at the end of the Fifteenth Century and the beginning of the Sixteenth, and after all this lapse of time it seems to us a sweet and natural expression of admirable human attributes.

In the new wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the labels of certain exhibits, purchases and loans allude briefly to "studio of Jean de Rome." It is an allusion which especially interests us, as our country now holds examples of this atelier which make us wish to know more about its master. He was a designer in the marvellous transition period of about 1500, when art trembled between the restraint of ecclesiastic Gothic and the voluptuous freedom of the Renaissance; hesitated between the conventions of religion and the abandonment to luxury, to indulgence of the senses. It is the fashion to regard periods of transition as times of decadence, of false standards of hybrid production, but at least they are full of deepest interest to the student of design who finds in the tremulous dawn of the new idea a flush which beautifies the last years of the old method.

Attributed to this newly unearthed studio of Jean de Rome hangs a marvellous tapestry in the new wing alluded to, one which deserves repeated visits. (Plate facing page 58.) Indeed, to see it once creates the desire to see it again, so beautiful is it in drawing and so exquisite

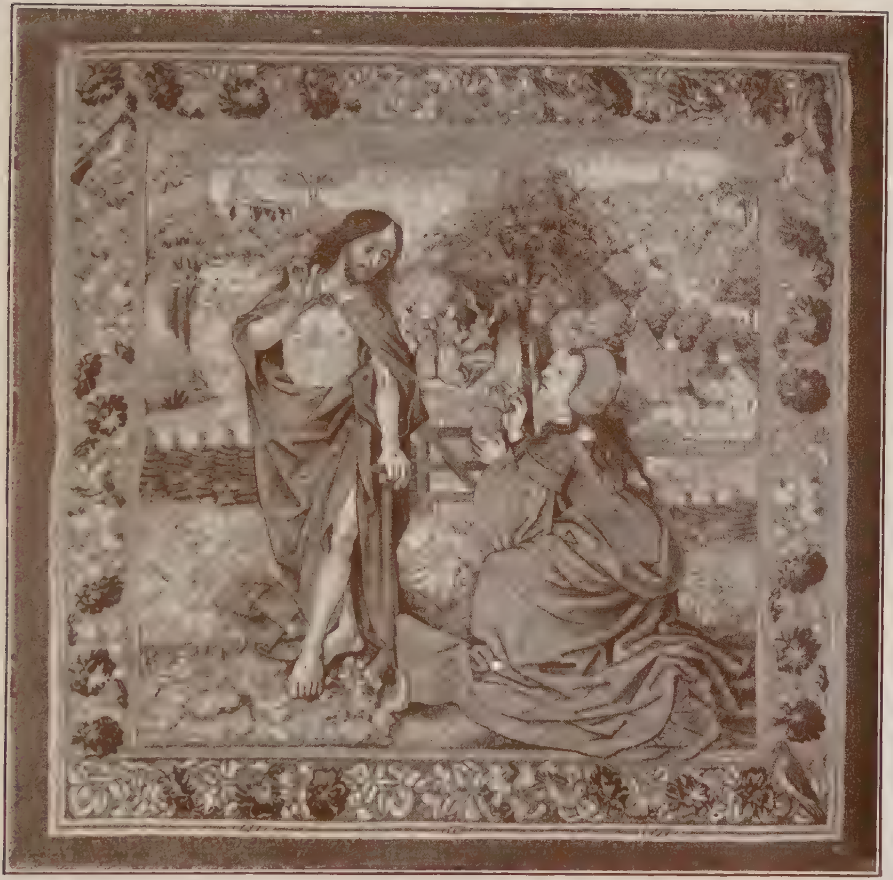


THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
Flemish Tapestry, about 1510. Collection of J. Pierpont Morgan, Esq., New York

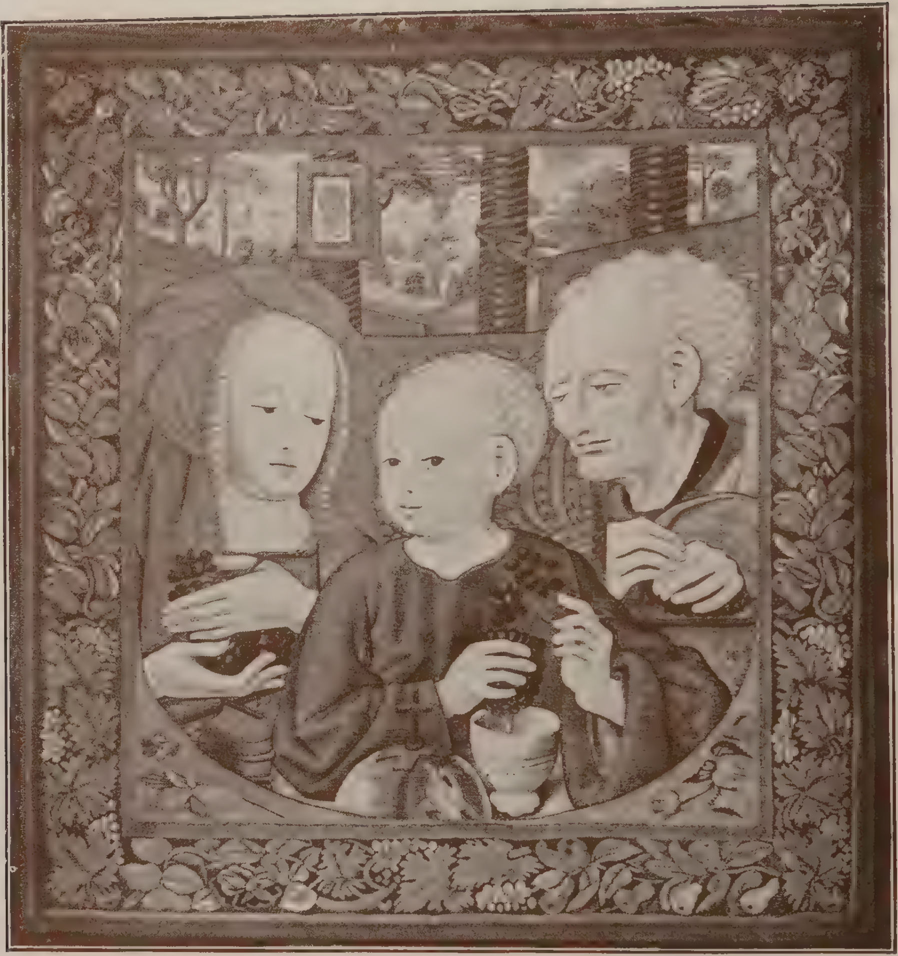
in colour and weave. It is suggested that Quentin Matsys is responsible for the drawing, and it is known that only Bruges or Brussels could produce such perfection of textile. Indeed, Jean de Rome is by some authorities spoken of as Jean de Brussels, for it is there that he worked long and well, assisting to produce those wonders of textile art that have never been surpassed, not even by the Gobelins factory in the Seventeenth Century. The tapestry in the Metropolitan Museum is now the property of J. Pierpont Morgan, Esq., but began life as the treasure of the King and Queen of Spain who, at the time when Brussels was producing its best, were sitting firmly on a throne but just wrested from the Saracenic occupancy. Spain, while unable to establish famous and enduring tapestry factories of her own, yet was known always as a lavish buyer. Later, Cardinal Mazarin, with his trained Italian eye, detected at once the value of the tapestry and became possessed of it, counting it among his best treasures of art. It is a woven representation of the triptych, so favourite in the time of the Van Eycks, and is almost as rich with gold as those ancient altar decorations. The tapestry is variously called *The Kingdom of Heaven,* and *The Adoration of the Eternal Father* and is the most beautiful and important of its kind in America. Fortunate they who can go to the museum to see it—only less fortunate than those who can go to see it many times.

In the private collection of Martin A. Ryerson, Esq., of Chicago, are three examples of great perfection. They belonged to the celebrated art collection of Baron Spitzer, which fact, apart from their beauty, gives them renown. The first of these (plate facing page 60) is an appearance of Christ to the Magdalen after the Entombment, and is Flemish work of late in the Fifteenth Century. It is woven in silk and gold with infinite skill. With exquisite patience the weaver has brought out the crowded detail in the distance; indeed, it is this background, stretching away to the far sky, past the Tomb, beyond towns and plains of fruited trees to yet more cities set on a hill, that constitutes the greatest charm of the picture, and which must have brought hours of happy toil to the inspired weaver.

The second tapestry of Mr. Ryerson's three pieces is also Flemish of the late Fifteenth Century. (Plate facing page 61.) This small group of the Holy Family shows at its best the conscientious work of the time, a time wherein man regarded labour as a means of worshipping his God. The subject is treated by both artist and weaver with that loving care which approaches religion. The holy three are all engaged in holding bunches of grapes, while the Child symbolically spills their juice into a chalice. Other symbols are found in the book and the cross-surmounted globe. A background of flat drapery throws into beautiful relief the inspired faces of the group. Behind this stretches the miniature landscape, but the foreground is unfretted by detail, abounding in the repose of the simple surfaces of the garments of Mother and Child. By a subtle trick of line, St. Joseph is separated from the holier pair. The border is the familiar well-balanced Gothic composition of flower,



FLEMISH TAPESTRY, END OF FIFTEENTH CENTURY
Collection of Martin A. Ryerson, Esq., Chicago. Formerly in the Spitzer Collection



THE HOLY FAMILY
Flemish Tapestry, end of Fifteenth Century. Collection of Martin A. Ryerson, Esq., Chicago. Formerly in the Spitzer Collection

fruit, and leaf, all placed as though by the hand of Nature. The materials used are silk and gold, but one might well add that the soul of the weaver also entered into the fabric.

The third piece from the Spitzer collection bears all those marks of exquisite beauty with which Italy was teeming in the Fifteenth Century. (Color plate facing page 81.) Weavers from Brussels went down into Italy and worked under the direction of Italian artists who drew the designs. Andrea Mantegna was one of these. The patron of the industry was the powerful Gonzaga family. This tapestry of *The Annunciation* which Mr. Ryerson is so fortunate as to hang in his collection, is decorated with the arms of the Gonzaga family. The border of veined marble, the altar of mosaics and fine relief, the architecture of the outlying baptistry, the wreathed angel, all speak of Italy in that lovely moment when the Gothic had not been entirely abandoned and the Renaissance was but an opening bud.

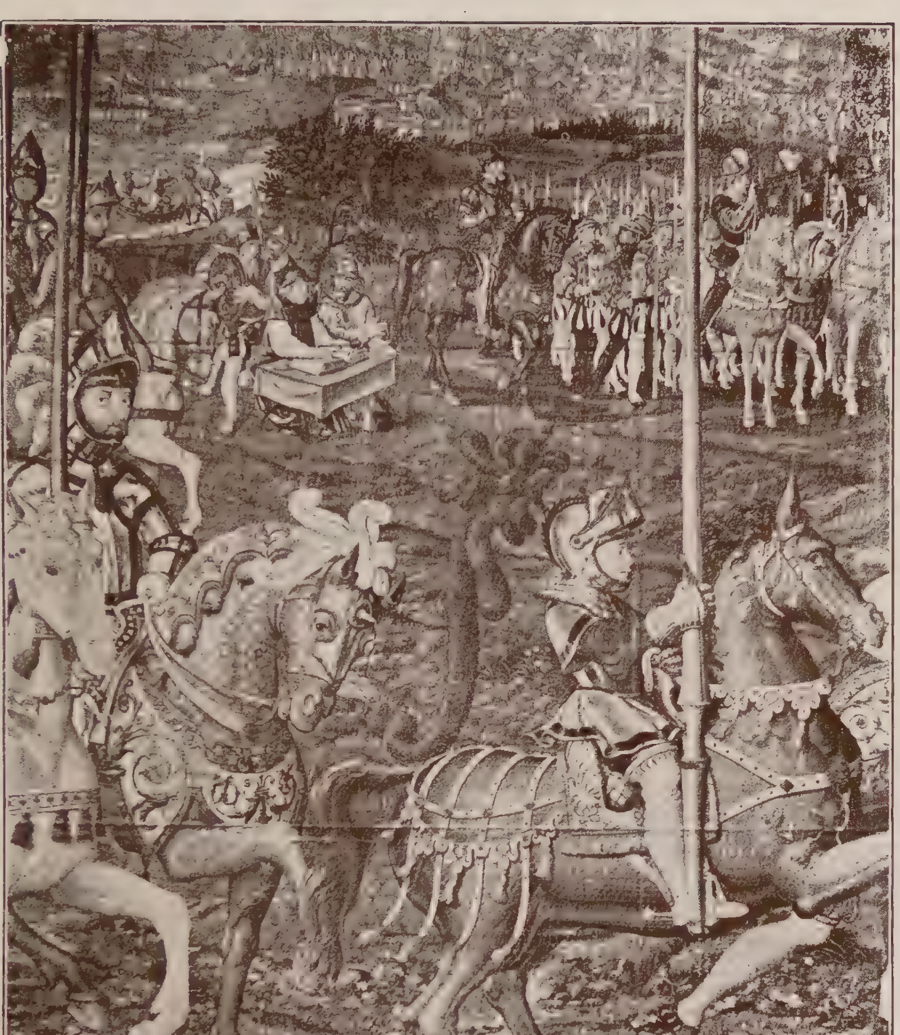
The highest work of painter and weaver—artists both—continued through thirty or forty years. Pity it is, the time had not been long enough for more remains of it to have come to us than those that scantily supply museums. After the Gothic perfection came the great change made in Flanders by the introduction of the Renaissance.

It came through the excellence of the weavers. It was not the worth of the artists that brought Brussels its greatest fame, but the humbler work of its tapissiers. Their lives, their endeavours counted more in textile art than did the Flemish school of painting. No such weavers existed in all the world. They were bound together as a guild, had restrictions and regulations of their own that would shame a trades union of to-day, and in change of politics had scant consideration from new powers. But in the end they were the ones to bring fame to the Brussels workshops.

In 1528 they were banded together by organisation, and from that time on their work is easily followed and identified. It was in that year that a law was made compelling weavers—and allowing weavers—to incorporate into the encompassing galloon of the tapestry the Brussels Brabant mark of two B's with a shield between. And it was about this time and later that the celebrated family of weavers named Pannemaker came into prominence through the talent of Wilhelm de Pannemaker, he who accompanied the Emperor Charles V on his expedition to Tunis.

This expedition flaunts itself in the set of tapestries now in Madrid. (Plate facing page 62.) The emperor seems, from our point of view, to have done it all with dramatic forethought. There was his special artist on the spot, Jan Vermeyen, to draw the superb cartoons, and accompanying him was Wilhelm de Pannemaker, the ablest weaver of his day, to set the loom and thrust the shuttle. Granada was the place selected for the weaving, and the finest of wool was set aside for it, besides lavish amounts of silk, and pounds of silver and gold. In three years, by the help of eighty workmen, Pannemaker completed his colossal task. Such was the master-weaver of the Sixteenth Century.

As for Pannemaker's imperial patron, John Addington



CONQUEST OF TUNIS BY CHARLES V (DETAIL)
Cartoon by Jan Vermeyen. Woven by Pannemaker. Royal Collection at Madrid

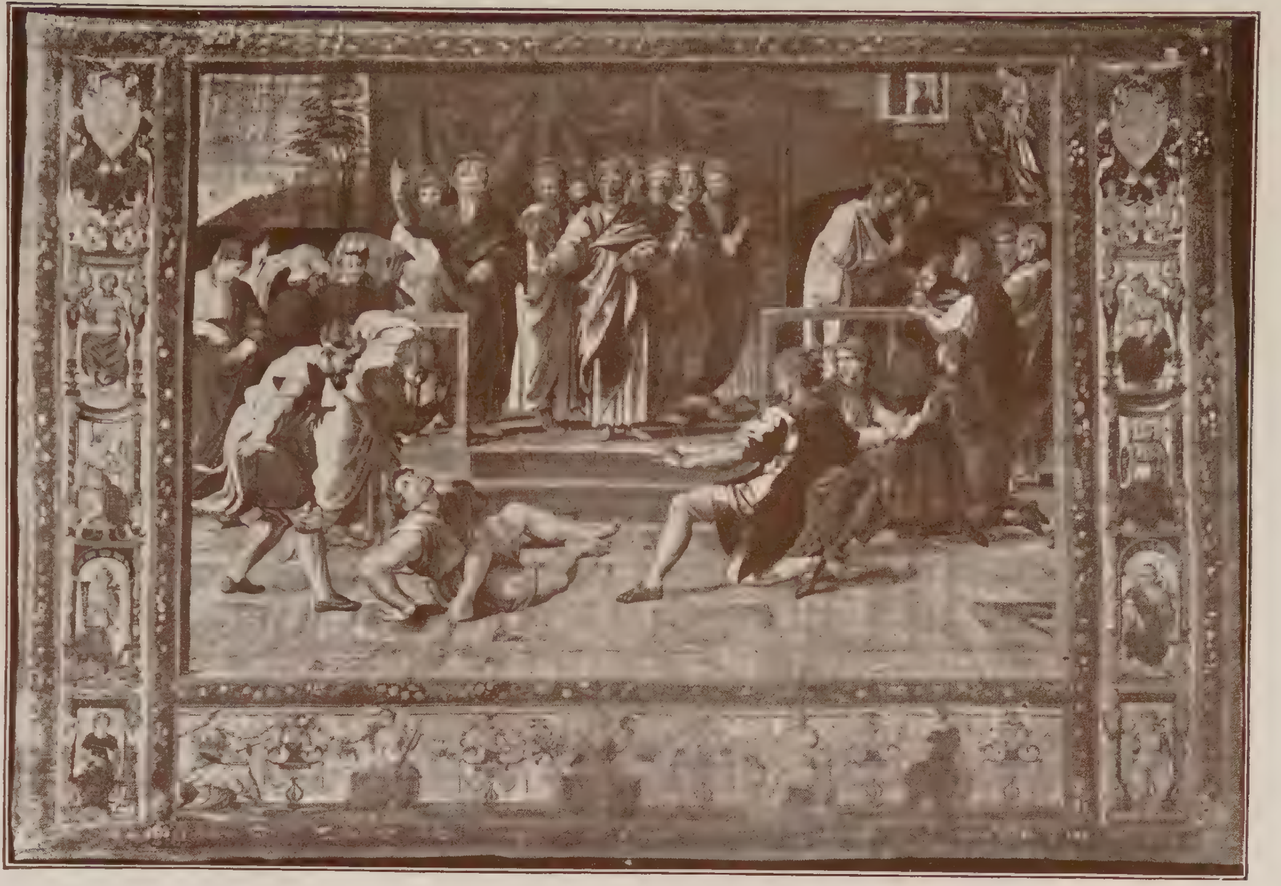
Symonds discriminatingly says of him: "Like a gale sweeping across a forest of trees in blossom, and bearing their fertilising pollen to far distant trees, the storm of Charles Fifth's army carried far and wide through Europe the productive energy of the Renaissance."

CHAPTER VI

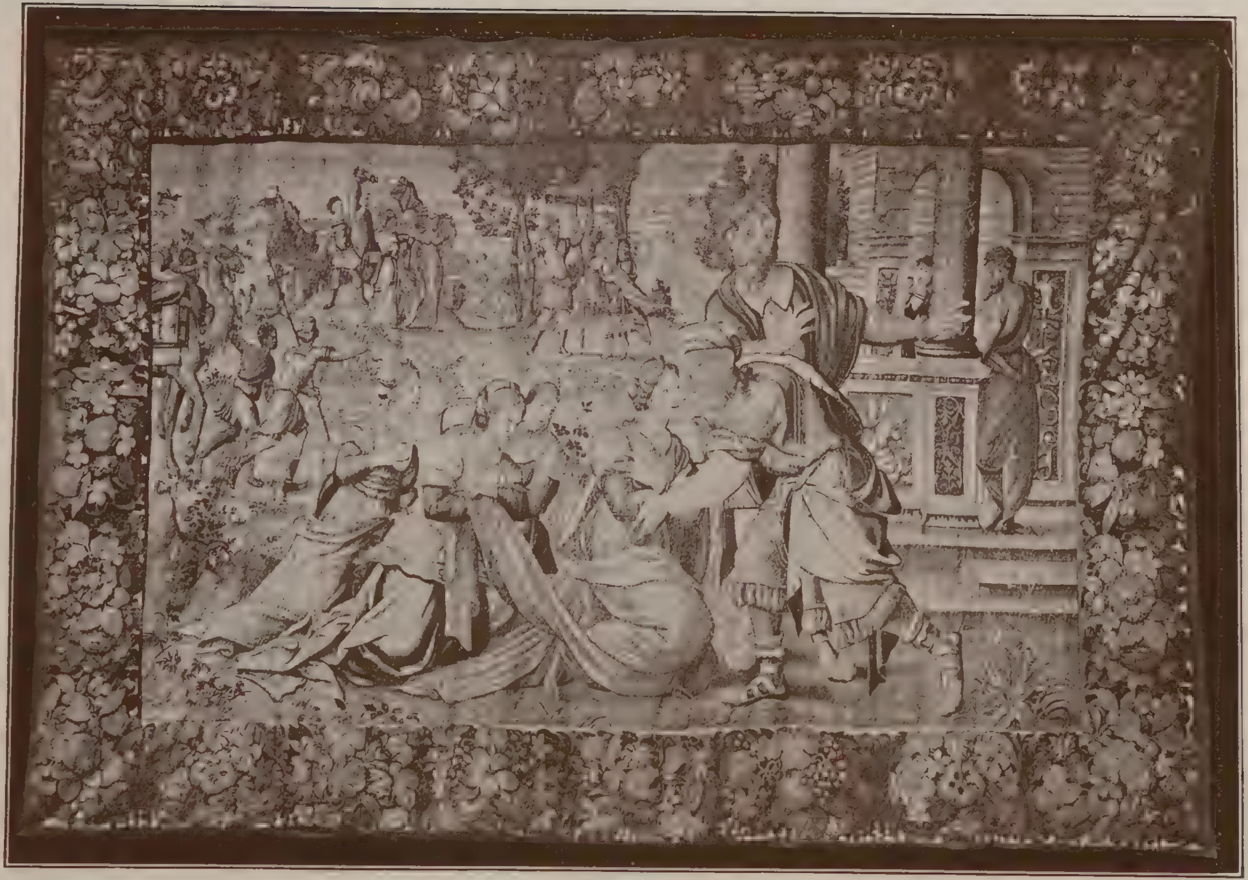
RENAISSANCE INFLUENCE

BRUSSELS in 1515, with her workmen at the zenith of their perfection, was given the order to weave the set of the *Acts of the Apostles* for the Pope to hang in the Sistine Chapel. (Plate facing page 64.) The cartoons were by the great Raphael. Not only did he draw the splendid scenes, but with his exquisite invention elaborated the borders. Thus was set in the midst of the Brussels ateliers a pattern for the new art that was to retire the nice perfection of the previous school of restraint. From that time, all was regulated by new standards.

Before considering the change that came to designs in tapestry, it is necessary that both mind and eye should be literally savants in the Gothic. Without this the greatest point in classifying and distinguishing is missed. The dainty grace of the verdure and flowers, the exquisite models of the architectural details, the honest, simple scheme of colour, all these are distinguishing marks, but to them is added the still greater one of the figures and their grouping. In the very early work, these are few in number, all equally accented in size and finish, but later the laws of perspective are better understood, and subordinates to the subject are drawn smaller. This gives opportunity for increase in the number of personages, and



DEATH OF ANANIAS.—FROM ACTS OF THE APOSTLES BY RAPHAEL
From the Palace of Madrid



THE STORY OF REBECCA

Brussels Tapestry. Sixteenth Century. Collection of Arthur Astor Carey, Esq., Boston

for the introduction of the horses and dogs and little wild animals that cause a childish thrill of delight wherever they are encountered, so like are they to the species that haunt childhood's fairyland.

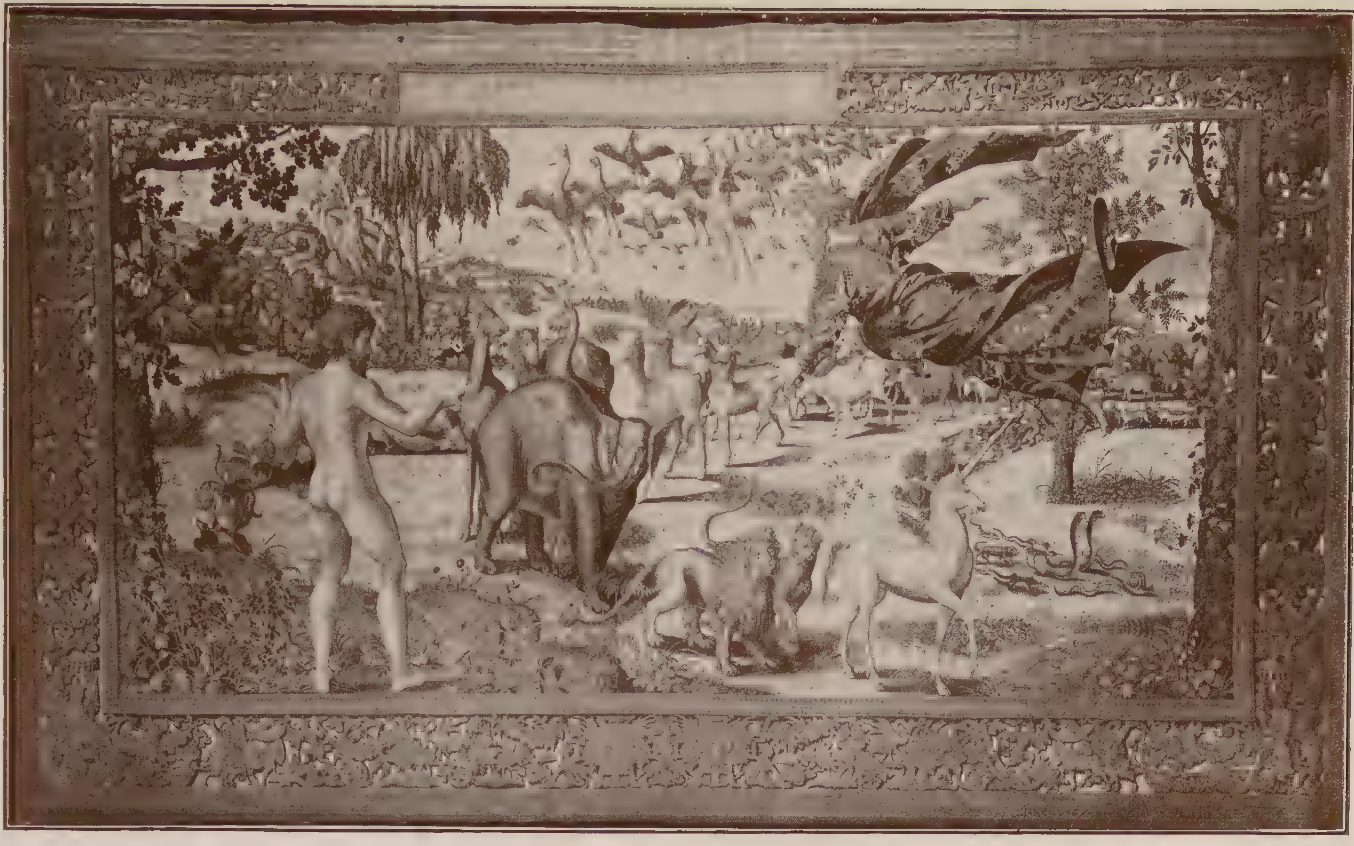
Indeed, the Gothic tapestries more than any other existing pictures take us back to that epoch of our lives when we lived in romance, when the Sleeping Beauty hid in just such towers, when the prince rode such a horse and appeared an elegant young knight. The inscrutable mystery of those folk of other days is like the inscrutable mystery of that childhood time, the Mediæval time of the imagination, and those of us who remember its joys gaze silent and happy in the tapestry room of the Ducal Palace at Nancy, or in Mary's Chamber at Holyrood, or in any place whatever where hang the magic pictured cloths.

When the highest development of a style is reached a change is sure to come. It may be a degeneration, or it may be the introduction of a new style through some great artistic impulse either native or introduced by contact with an outside influence. Fortunately, the Gothic passed through no pallid process of deterioration. The examples that nest comfortably in the museums of the world or in the homes of certain fortunate owners, do not contain marks of decadence—only of transition. It is a style that was replaced, but not one that died the death of decadence.

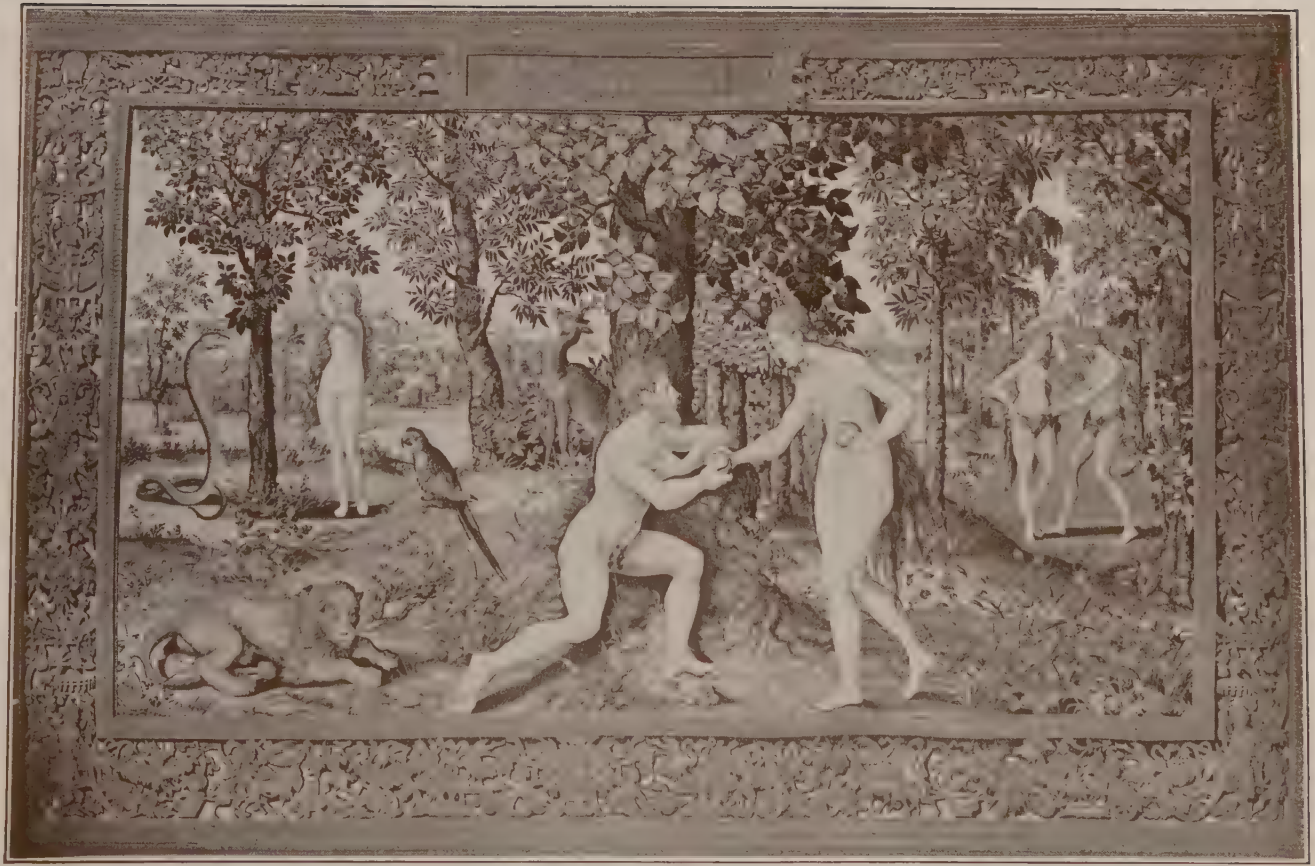
It is with reluctance that one who loves the Gothic will leave it for the more recent art of the Renaissance. Its charm is one that embodies chasteness, grace, and simplicity, one that is so exquisitely finished, and so individual that the mind and eye rest lovingly upon its decorative expressions. It is averred that the introduction of the revived styles of Greece and Rome into France destroyed an art superior. One is inclined to this opinion in studying a tapestry of the highest Gothic expression, a finished product of the artist and the craftsman, both having given to its execution their honest labour and highest skill. Unhappily it is often, with the tapestry lover, a case similar to that of the penniless boy before the bakeshop window—you may look, but you may not have,—for not often are tapestries such as these for sale. Only among the experienced dealer-collectors is one fortunate enough to find these rare remnants of the past which for colour, design and texture are unsurpassed.

But the Gothic was bound to give way as a fashion in design. Politics of Europe were at work, and men were more easily moving about from one country to another. The cities of the various provinces over which the Burgundian dukes had ruled were prevented by natural causes, from being united. Arras, Ghent, Liége instead of forming a solidarity, were separate units of interest. This made the subjugation of one or the other an easy matter to the tyrant who oppressed. As Arras declined under the misrule of Charles le Téméraire (whose possessions at one time outlined the whole northern and eastern border of France) Brussels came into the highest prominence as a source of the finest tapestries.

The great change in tapestries that now occurs is the same that altered all European art and decoration and



THE CREATION
Flemish Tapestry. Italian Cartoon, Sixteenth Century



THE ORIGINAL SIN
Flemish Tapestry. Italian Cartoon, Sixteenth Century

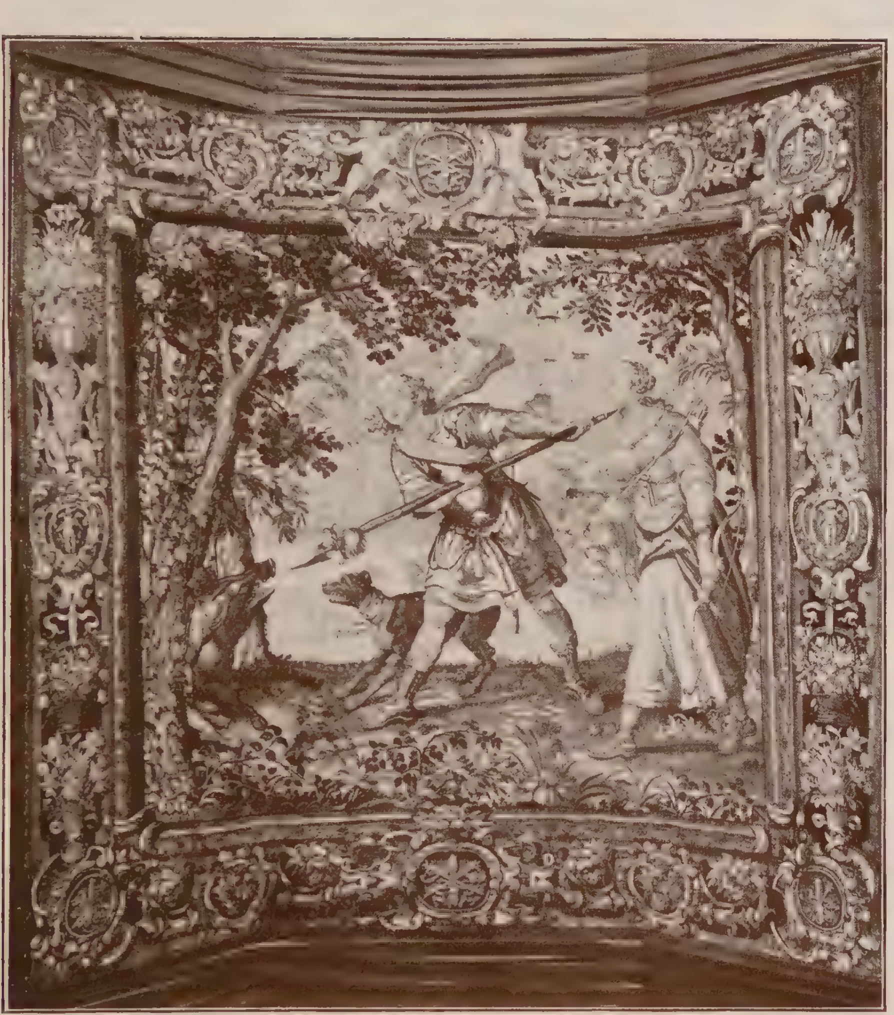
architecture. Indeed it cannot be limited to these evidences alone, for it affected literature, politics, religion, every intellectual evidence. Man was breaking his bonds and becoming freed for centuries to come. The time was well-named for the new birth. Like another Birth of long ago, it occurred in the South, and its influence gradually spread over the entire civilised world. The Renaissance, starting in Italy, gradually flushed the whole of Europe with its glory. Artists could not be restrained. Throbbing with poetry to be expressed, they threw off design after design of inspired beauty and flooded the world with them. The legitimate field of painting was not large enough for their teeming originality which pre-empted also the field of decorative design as well. Many painters apprenticed themselves to goldsmiths and silversmiths to become yet more cunning in the art of minute design, and the guilds of Florence held the names best known in the fine arts.

Tapestry weaving seems a natural expression in the North, the impulsive supplying of a local need. Possibly Italy felt no such need throughout the Middle Ages. However that may be, when her artists composed designs for woven pictures there were no permanent artisans at home of sufficient skill to weave them.

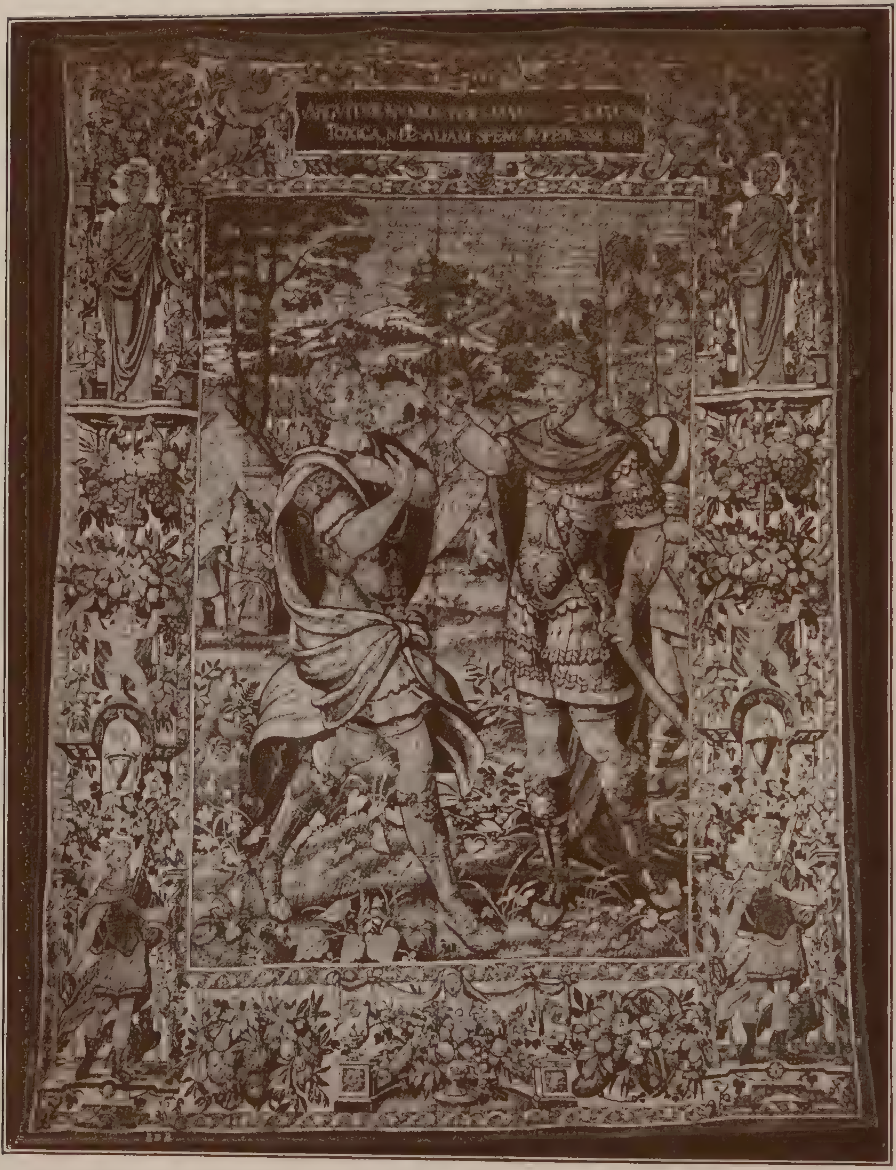
But up in the North, craftsmen were able to produce work of such brilliant and perfect execution that the great artists of Italy were inspired to draw cartoons. And so it came, that to make sure of having their drawings translated into wool and silk with proper artistic feeling, the cartoons of Raphael were bundled off by trusty carriers to the ateliers of Flanders. Thus Italy got her tapestries of the Renaissance, and thus Flanders acquired by inoculation the rich art of the Renaissance.

The direct cause of the change in Flemish style of tapestries was in this way brought about by the Renaissance of Italy. New rules of drawing were dominating. Changes were slower when travelling was difficult, and the average of literacy was low; but gradually there came creeping up to Brussels cartoon after cartoon in the new method, for her skilled workmen to transpose into wool and silk and metal, "thread of Arras," and "gold and silver of Cyprus." Italy had the artists, Brussels had the craftsmen—what happier combination could be made than the union of these two? Thus was the great change brought about in tapestries, and this union is the great fact to be borne in mind about the difference between the Gothic tapestries and those which so quickly succeeded them.

From now on the old method is abandoned, not only in Brussels, but everywhere that the high-warp looms are set up. The "art nouveau" of that day influenced every brush and pencil. The great crowding of serried hosts on a single field disappeared, and fewer but perfect figures played their parts on the woven surface. Wherever architectural details, such as porticoes or columns, were introduced, these dropped the old designs of "pointed" style or battlements, and took on the classic or the high Renaissance that ornaments the façade of Pavia's Certosa. One by one the wildwood flowers receded before the advance of civilisation, very much as those in the



MELEAGER AND ATALANTA
Flemish design, second half of Seventeenth Century. Woven in Paris workshops by Charles de Comans



PUNIC WAR SERIES
Brussels Tapestry. Sixteenth Century. Collection of Arthur Astor Carey, Esq., Boston

veritable land are wont to do, and their place was taken by a verdure as rich as the South could produce, with heavy foliage and massive blossoms.

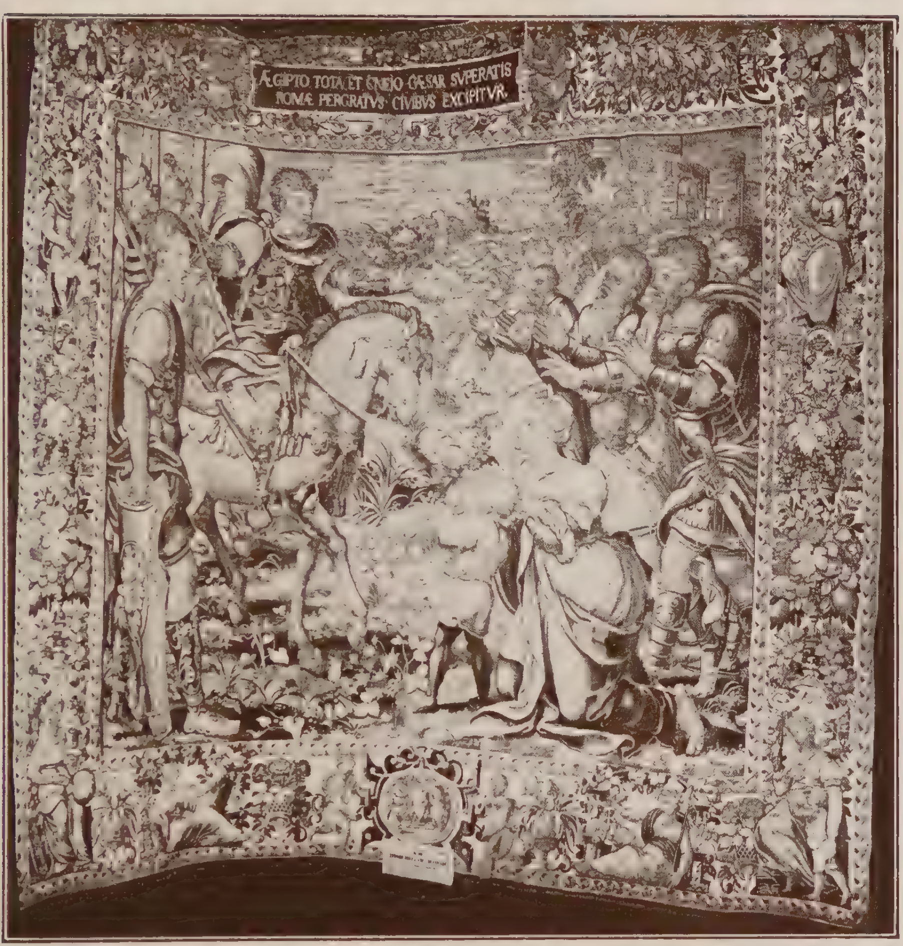
It is impossible to overestimate the importance to Brussels of the animating experience and distinguished commission of executing the set of tapestries for the Sistine Chapel after cartoons by Raffaelo Sanzio. The date is one to tie to (1515) and the influence of the work was far-reaching. The Gothic method could no longer continue.

The Renaissance spread its influence, established its standards and introduced that wave of productiveness which always followed its introduction. There are many who doubt the superiority of the voluptuous art of the high Renaissance. There are those who prefer (perhaps for reasons of sentiment) the early Gothic, and many more who love far better the sweet purity of the early Renaissance. Before us Raphael presents his full figures replete with action, rich with broad, open curves in nudity, and magnificent with lines of flowing drapery. To him be accorded all due honour; but, if it is the privilege of the artist's spirit to wander still on earth, he must find his particular post-mortem punishment in viewing the deplorable school of exaggeration which his example founded. Who would not prefer one of the chaste tapestries of perfected Gothic to one of those which followed Raphael, imitating none of his virtues, exaggerating his faults? It is these followers, the virilities of whose false art is as that of weeds, who have come almost to our own day and who have succeeded in spoiling the historical aspect of the New Testament for many an imaginative Sunday-school attendant by giving us Bible folk in swarthy undress, in lunatic beards and in unwearable drapings. These terrible persons, descendants of Raphael's art, can never stir a human sympathy.

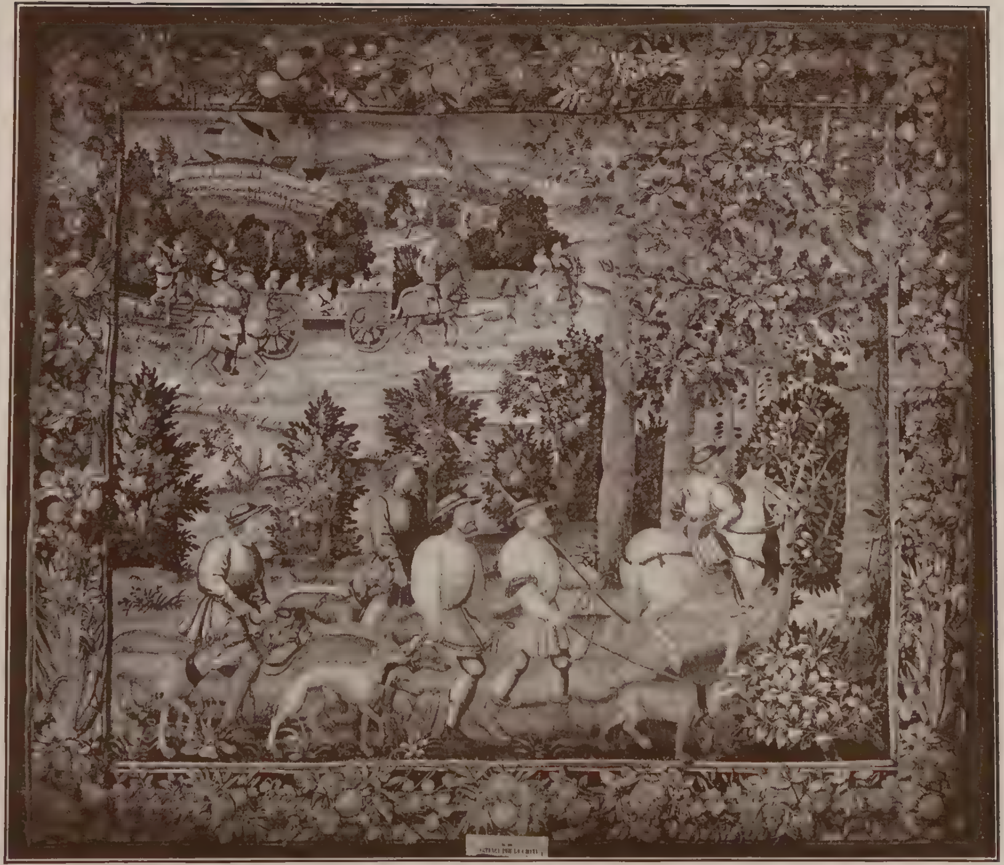
Just here a word must be said of the workmen, the weavers of Brussels. For them certain fixed rules were made, but also they were allowed much liberty in execution. The artist might draw the big cartoons and thus become the governing influence, but much of the choice of colour and thread was left to the weaver. This made of him a more important factor in the composition than a mere artisan; he was, in fact, an artist, must needs be, to execute a work of such sublimity as the Raphael set.

And as a weaver, his patience was without limit. Thread by thread, the warp was set, and thread by thread the woof was woven and coerced into place by the relentless comb of the weaver. Perhaps a man might make a square foot, by a week of close application; but "how much" mattered nothing—it was "how well" that counted. Haste is disassociable from labour of our day; we might produce—or re-produce—tapestries as good as the old, but some one is in haste for the hanging, and excellency goes by the board. The weaver of those days of perfection was content to be a weaver, felt his ambition gratified if his work was good.

Peter van Aelst was the master chosen to execute the Raphael tapestries, and the pieces were finished in three or four years. Those who think present-day prices high, should think on the fact that Pope Leo X paid $130,000


ÆGIPTO TOTA ET GNEIO CÆSAR SVPERATIS
ROMÆ PERGRATVS CIVIBVS EXCIPITVR.

EPISODE IN THE LIFE OF CÆSAR
Flemish Tapestry. Sixteenth Century. Gallery of the Arazzi, Florence



WILD BOAR HUNT
Flemish Cartoon and Weaving, Sixteenth Century. Gallery of the Arazzi, Florence

for the execution of the tapestries, which in 1515 counted for more than now. Raphael received $1,000 each for the cartoons, almost all of which are now guarded in England. The tapestries after a varied history are resting safely in the Vatican, a wonder to the visitor.

When Van Aelst had finished his magnificent work, the tapestries were sent to Rome. Those who go now to the Sistine Chapel to gaze upon Michael Angelo's painted ceiling, and the panelled sidewalls of Botticelli and other cotemporary artists, are more than intoxicated with the feast. But fancy what the scene must have been when Pope Leo X summoned his gorgeous guard and cardinals around him in this chapel enriched also with the splendour of these unparalleled hangings.

And thus it came that Italy held the first place—almost the only place—in design, and Brussels led in manufacture.

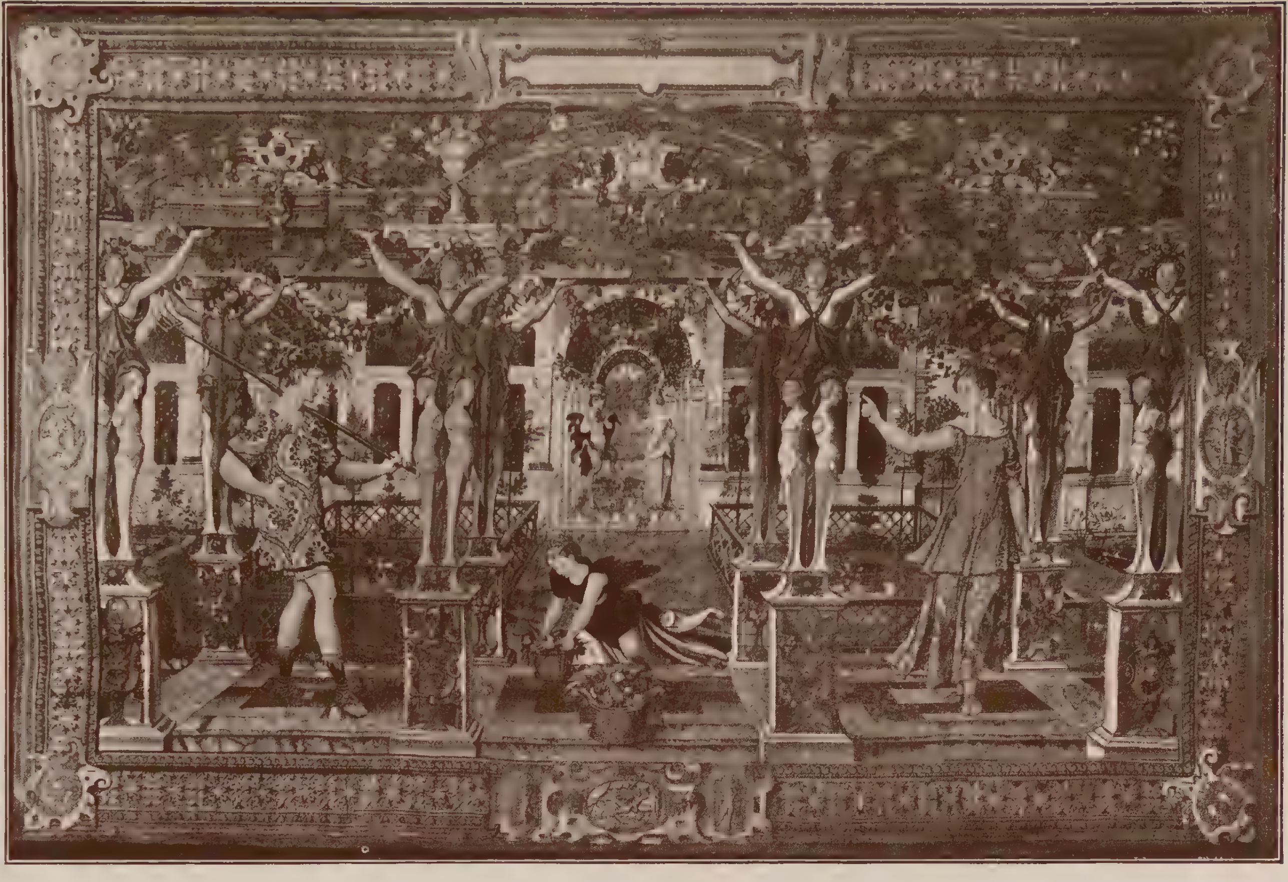
In 1528 appeared a mark on Brussels' tapestries which distinguished them from that time on. Prior to that their works, except in certain authenticated instances, are not always distinguishable from those of other looms—of which many existed in many towns. The mark alluded to is the famous one of two large B's on either side of a shield or scutcheon. This was woven into a plain band on the border, and the penalty for its misuse was the no small one of the loss of the right hand—the death of the culprit as a weaver. This mark and its laws were intended to discourage fraud, to promote perfection and to conserve a high reputation for weavers as well as for dealers.

CHAPTER VII

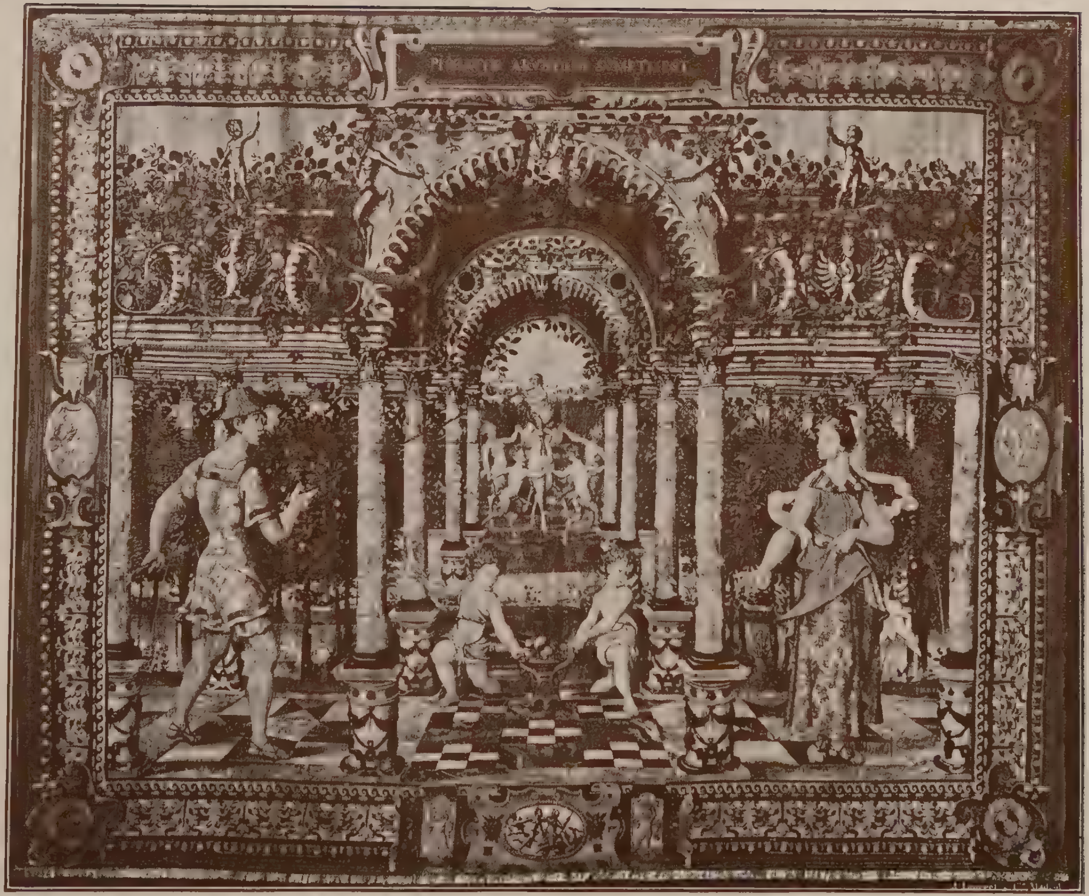
RENAISSANCE TO RUBENS

WHEN the Raphael cartoons first came to Brussels the new method was a little difficult for the tapissier. His hand had been accustomed to another manner. He had, too, been allowed much liberty in his translations—if one may so call the art of reproducing a painted model on the loom. He might change at will the colour of a drapery, even the position of a figure, and, most interesting fact, he had on hand a supply of stock figures that he might use at will, making for himself suitable combination. The figures of Adam and Eve gave a certain cachet to hangings not entirely secular and these were slipped in when a space needed filling. There were also certain lovely ladies who might at one time play the rôle of attendant at a feast *al fresco,* at another time a character in an allegory. The weaver's hand was a little conventional when he began to execute the Raphael cartoons, but during the three years required for their execution he lost all restriction and was ready for the freer manner.

It must not be supposed the Flemish artists were content to let the Italians entirely usurp them in the drawing of cartoons. The lovely refinement of the Bruges school having been thrust aside, the Fleming tried his hand at the freer method, not imitating its classicism but



VERTUMNUS AND POMONA
First half of Sixteenth Century. Royal Collection of Madrid



VERTUMNUS AND POMONA
First half of Sixteenth Century. Royal Collection of Madrid

giving his themes a broader treatment. The Northern temperament failed to grasp the spirit of the South, and figures grew gross and loose in the exaggerated drawing. Borders, however, show no such deterioration; the attention to detail to which the old school was accustomed was here continued and with good effect. No stronger evidence is needed than some of these half savage portrayals of life in the Sixteenth Century to declare the classic method an exotic in Flanders.

But with the passing of the old Gothic method, there was little need for other cartoonists than the Italian, so infinitely able and prolific were they. Andrea del Sarto, Titian, Paolo Veronese, Giulio Romano, these are among the artists whose work went up to Brussels workshops and to other able looms of the day. We can fancy the fair face of Andrea's wife being lovingly caressed by the weaver's fingers in his work; we can imagine the beauties of Titian, the sumptuousness of Veronese's feasts, and the fat materialism of Giulio Romano's heavy cherubs, all contributing to the most beautiful of textile arts.

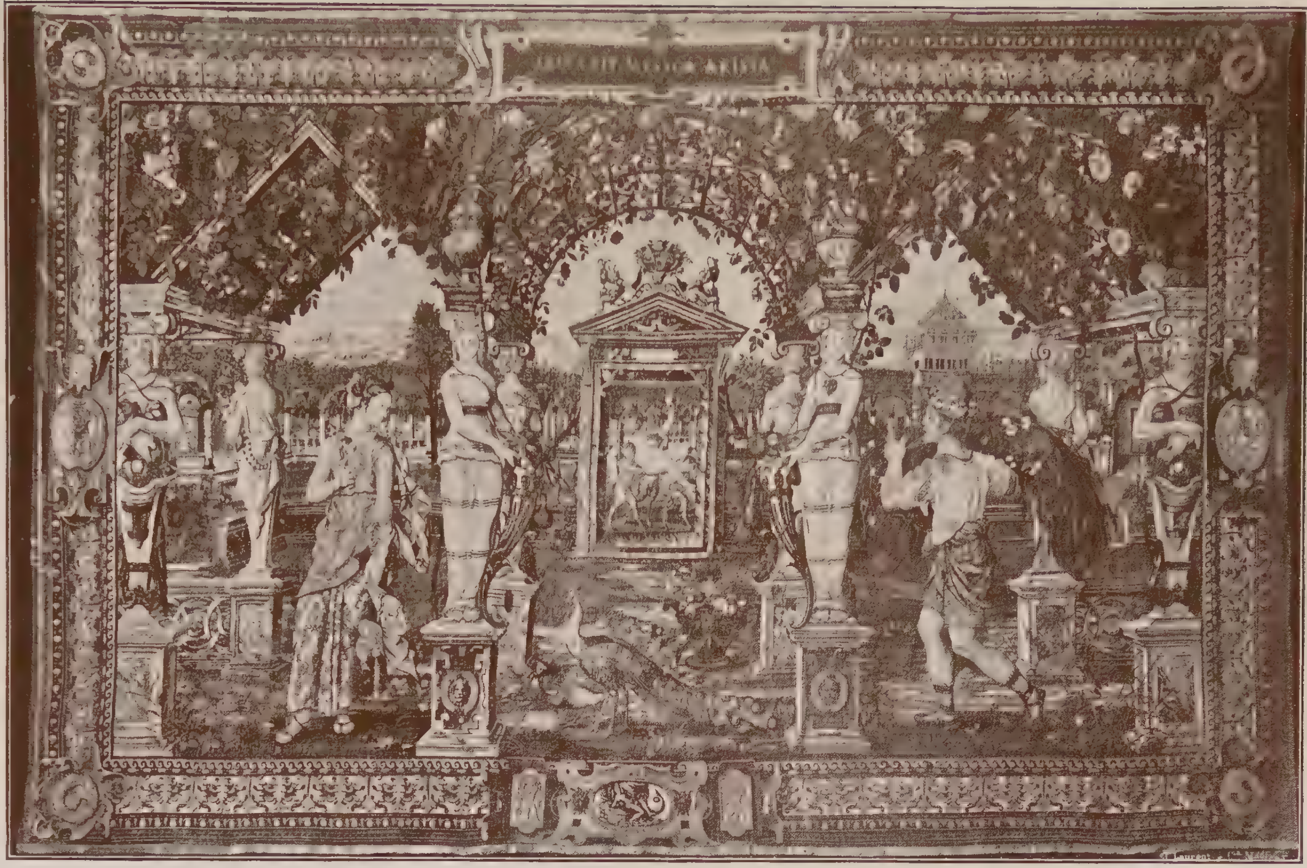
Still earlier, Mantegna supplied a series of idealised Pompeian figures exquisitely composed, set in a lacy fancy of airy architectural detail, in which he idealised all the gods of Olympus. Each fair young goddess, each strong and perfect god, stood in its particular niche and indicated its *penchant* by a tripod, a peacock, an apple or a caduceus, as clue to the proper name. Such airy beauty, such dainty conception, makes of the gods rulers of æsthetics, if not of fate. This series of Mantegna was the inspiration two centuries later of the *Triumphs of the Gods,* and similar hangings of the newly-formed Gobelins.

Giulio Romano drew, among other cartoons, a set of *Children Playing,* which were the inspiration later at the Gobelins for Lebrun's *Enfants Jardiniers.*

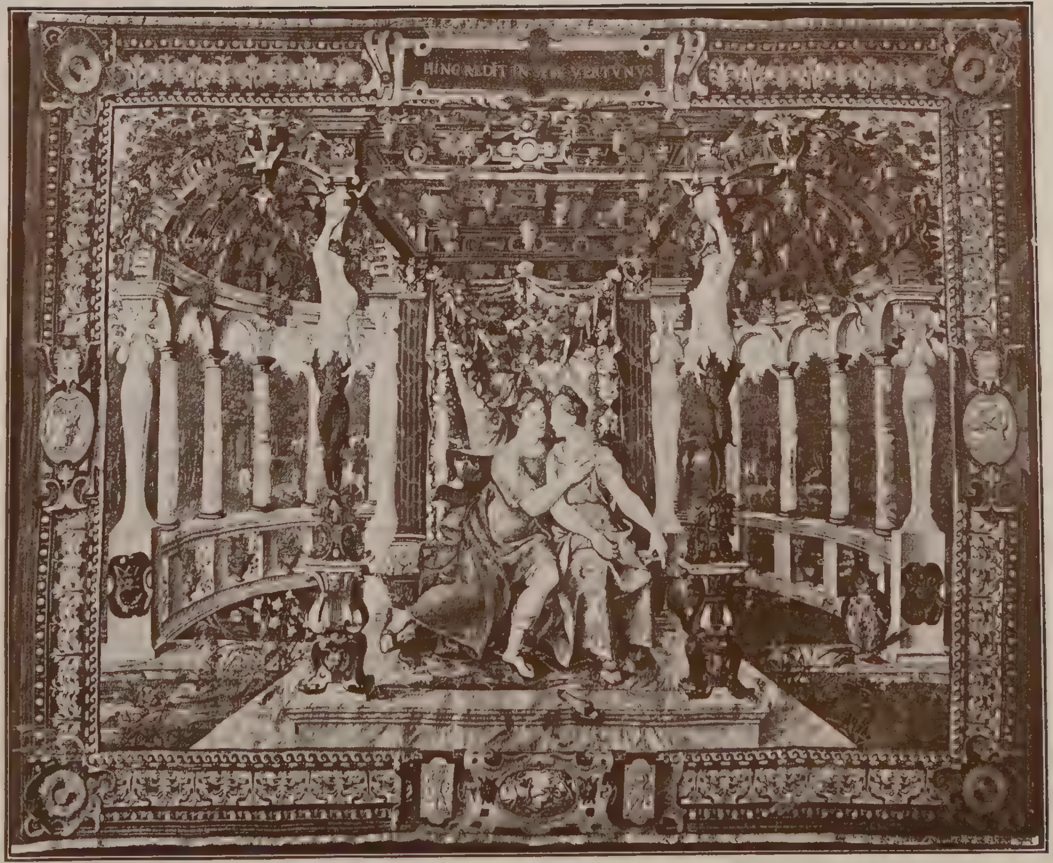
As classic treatment was the mode in the Sixteenth Century, so classic subject most appealed. The loves and adventures of gods and heroes gave stories for an infinite number of sets. As it was the fashion to fill a room with a series, not with miscellaneous and contrasting bits, several tapestries similar in subject and treatment were a necessity. The gods were carried through their adventures in varying composition, but the borders in all the set were uniform in style and measurement.

In those prolific days, when ideas were crowding fast for expression, the border gave just the outlet necessary for the superfluous designs of the artist. He was wont to plot it off into squares with such architectonic fineness as Mina da Fiesole might have used, and to make of each of these a picture or a figure so perfect that in itself it would have sufficient composition for an entire tapestry. All honour to such artists, but let us never once forget that without the skill and talent of the master-weaver these beauties would never have come down to us.

The collection of George Blumenthal, Esquire, of New York, contains as beautiful examples of Sixteenth Century composition and weaving as could be imagined. Two of these were found in Spain—the country which



VERTUMNUS AND POMONA
First half of Sixteenth Century. Royal Collection of Madrid



VERTUMNUS AND POMONA
First half of Sixteenth Century. Royal Collection of Madrid

has ever hoarded her stores of marvellous tapestries. They represent the story of *Mercury*. (Frontispiece.) The cartoon is Italian, and so perfect is its drawing, so rich in invention is the exquisite border, that the name of Raphael is half-breathed by the thrilled observer. But if the artist is not yet certainly identified, the name of the weaver is certain, for on the galloon he has left his sign. It is none other than the celebrated Wilhelm de Pannemaker.

In addition to this is the shield and double B of the Brussels workshop, which after 1528 was a requirement on all tapestries beyond a certain small size. In 1544 the Emperor Charles V made a law that the mark or name of the weaver and the mark of his town must be put in the border. It was this same Pannemaker of the Blumenthal tapestries who wove in Spain the *Conquest of Tunis* for Charles V. (Plate facing page 62.)

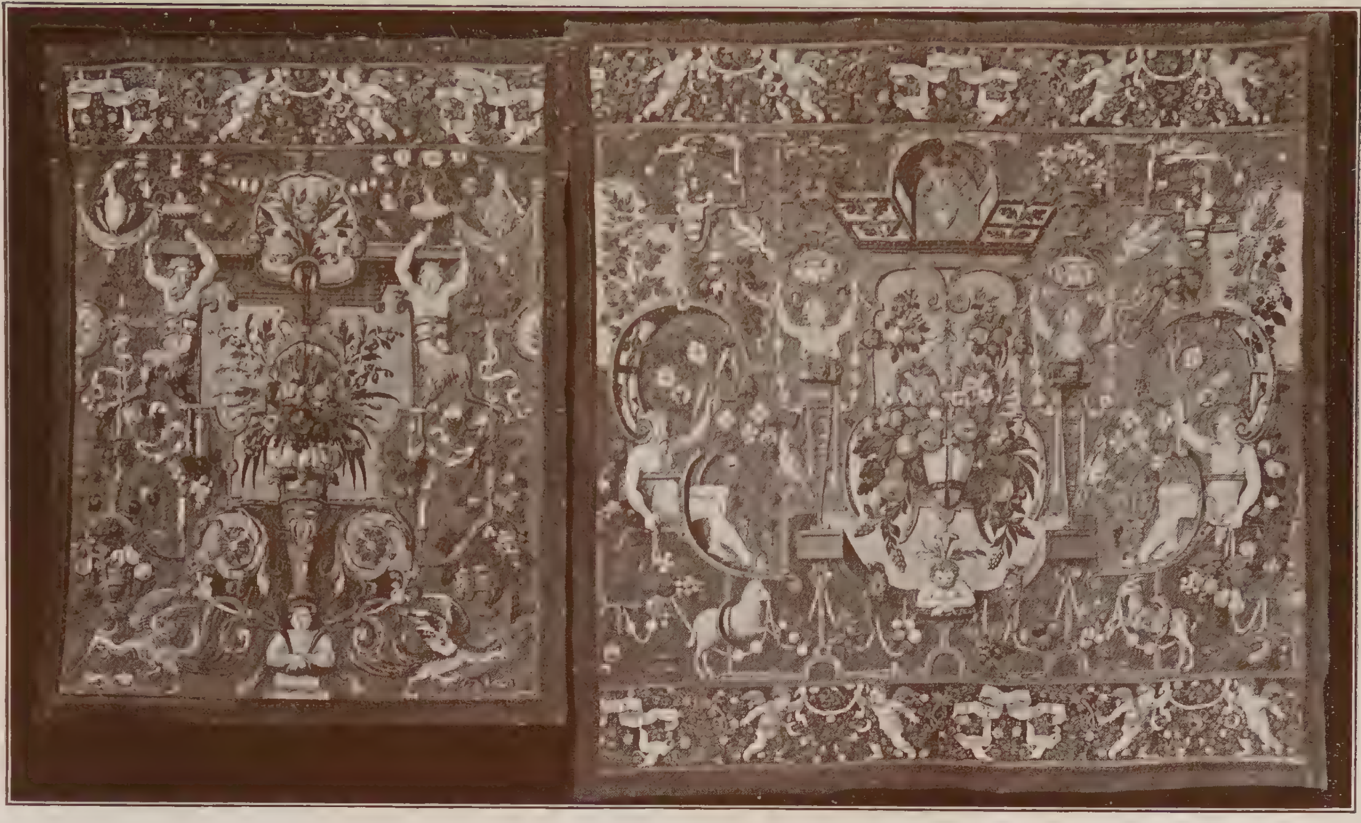
Mr. Blumenthal's tapestries must have carried with them some such contract for fine materials as that which attended the execution of the *Tunis* set, so superb are they in quality. Indeed, gold is so lavishly used that the border seems entirely made of it, except for the delicate figures resting thereon. It is used, too, in an unusual manner, four threads being thrown together to make more resplendent the weave.

The beauty of the cartoon as a picture, the decorative value of the broad surfaces of figured stuffs, the marvellous execution of the weaver, all make the value of these tapestries incalculable to the student and the lover of decorative art. Mr. Blumenthal has graciously placed them on exhibition in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Fortunate they who can absorb their beauty.

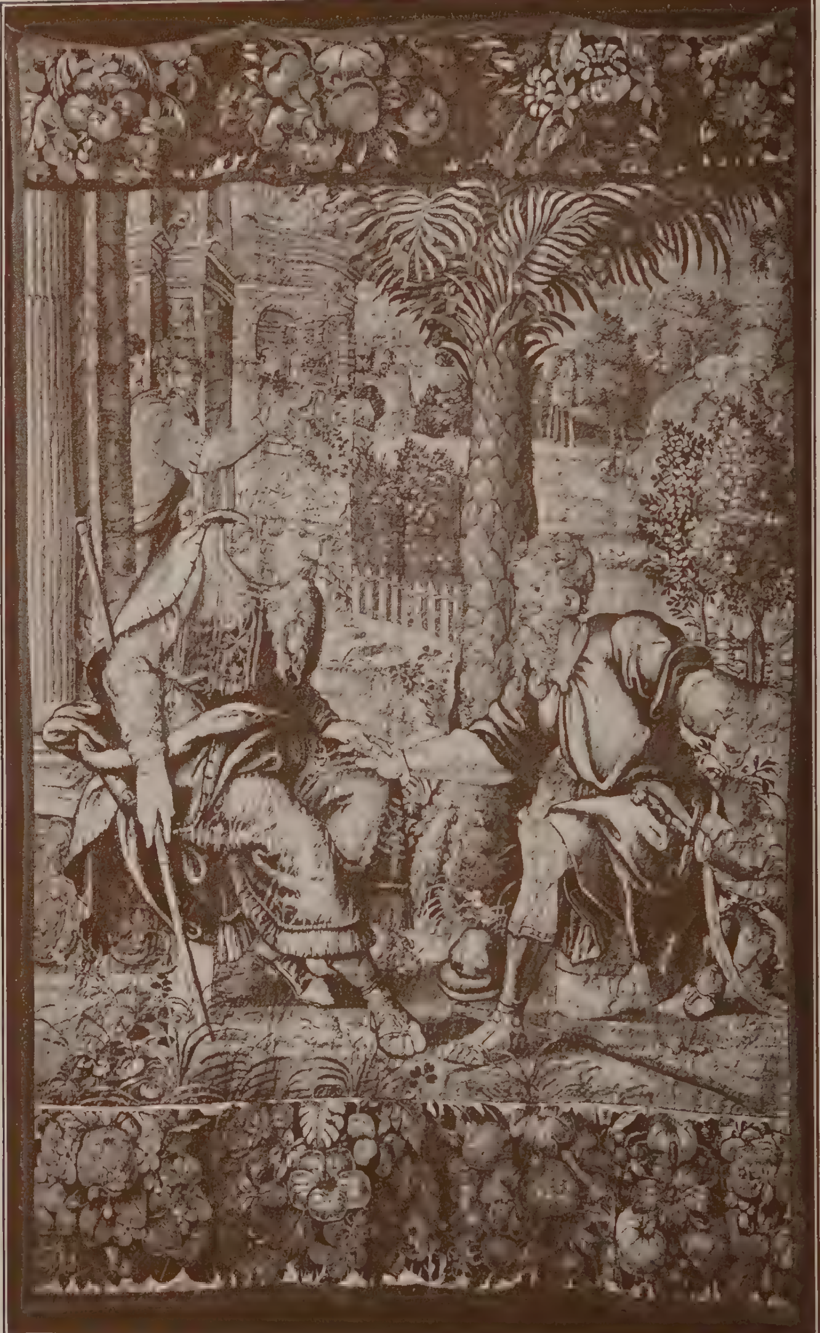
That treasure-house in Madrid which belongs to the royal family contains a set which bears the same earmarks as the Blumenthal tapestries. It is the set called *The Loves of Vertumnus and Pomona.* (Plates facing pages 39, 40, 41 and 42.) Here is the same manner of dress, the same virility, the same fulness of decoration. Yet the *Mercury* is drawn with finer art.

The delight in perfected detail belonging to the Italian school of artists resulted in an arrangement of *grotesques.* Who knows that the goldsmith's trade was not responsible for these tiny fantastics, as so many artists began as apprentices to workers in gold and silver? This evidence of talented invention must be observed, for it set the fashion for many a later tapestry, notably the *Grotesque Months* of the Seventeenth Century. Mingled with verdure and fruit, it is seen in work of the Eighteenth Century. But in its original expression is it the most talented. There we find that intellectual plan of design, that building of a perfect whole from a subtle combination of absolutely irreconcilable and even fabulous objects. Yet all is done with such beguiling art that both mind and eye are piqued and pleased with the impossible blending of realism and imagination.

Bacchiacca drew a filigree of attenuated fancies, threw them on a ground of single delicate colour, and sent them for weave to the celebrated masters, John Rost and Nicholas Karcher. (Plates facing pages 84 and 85.) These



TAPESTRIES FOR HEAD AND SIDE OF BED
Renaissance designs. Royal Collection of Madrid



THE STORY OF REBECCA

Brussels Tapestry. Sixteenth Century. Collection of Arthur Astor Carey, Esq., Boston

men at that time (1550) had set their Flemish looms in Italy.

And so it came that the Renaissance swept all before it in the world of tapestry. More than that, with the increase of culture and of wealth, with the increased mingling of the peoples of Europe after the raid of Charles V into Italy, the demand for tapestries enormously increased. They were wanted for furnishing of homes, they were wanted as gifts—to brides, to monarchs, to ambassadors. And they were wanted for splendid decoration in public festivals. They had passed beyond the stage of rarity and had become almost as much a matter of course as clothing.

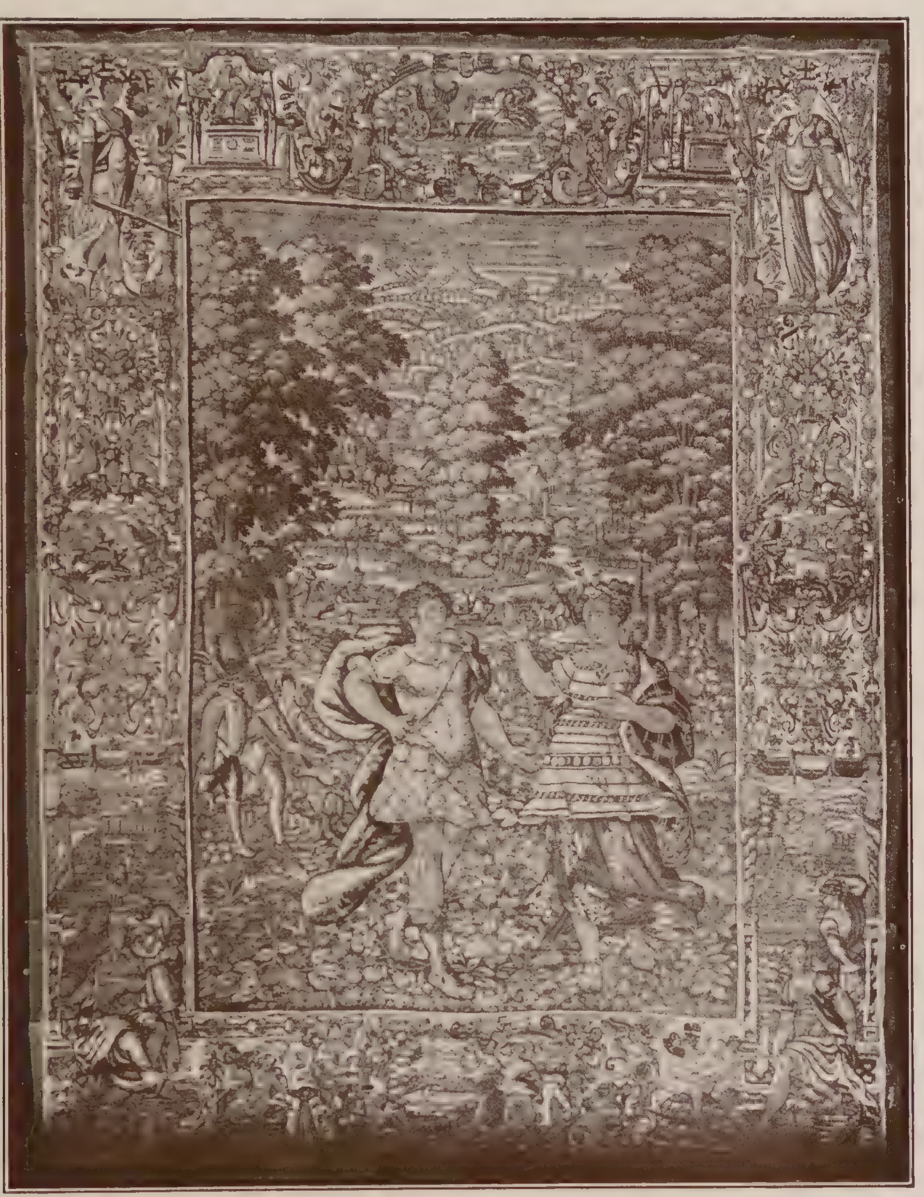
Brussels being in the ascendency as a producer, the world looked to her for their supply, and thereby came trouble. More orders came than it was possible to fill. The temptation was not resisted to accept more work than could be executed, for commercialism has ever a hold. The result was a driving haste. The director of the ateliers forced his weavers to quick production. This could mean but one thing, the lessening of care in every department.

Gradually it came about that expedition in a tapissier, the ability to weave quickly, was as great a desideratum as fine work. Various other expedients were resorted to beside the Sixteenth Century equivalent of "Step lively." Large tapestries were not set on a single loom, but were woven in sections, cunningly united when finished. In this manner more men could be impressed into the manufacture of a single piece. A wicked practice was introduced of painting or dyeing certain woven parts in which the colours had been ill-selected.

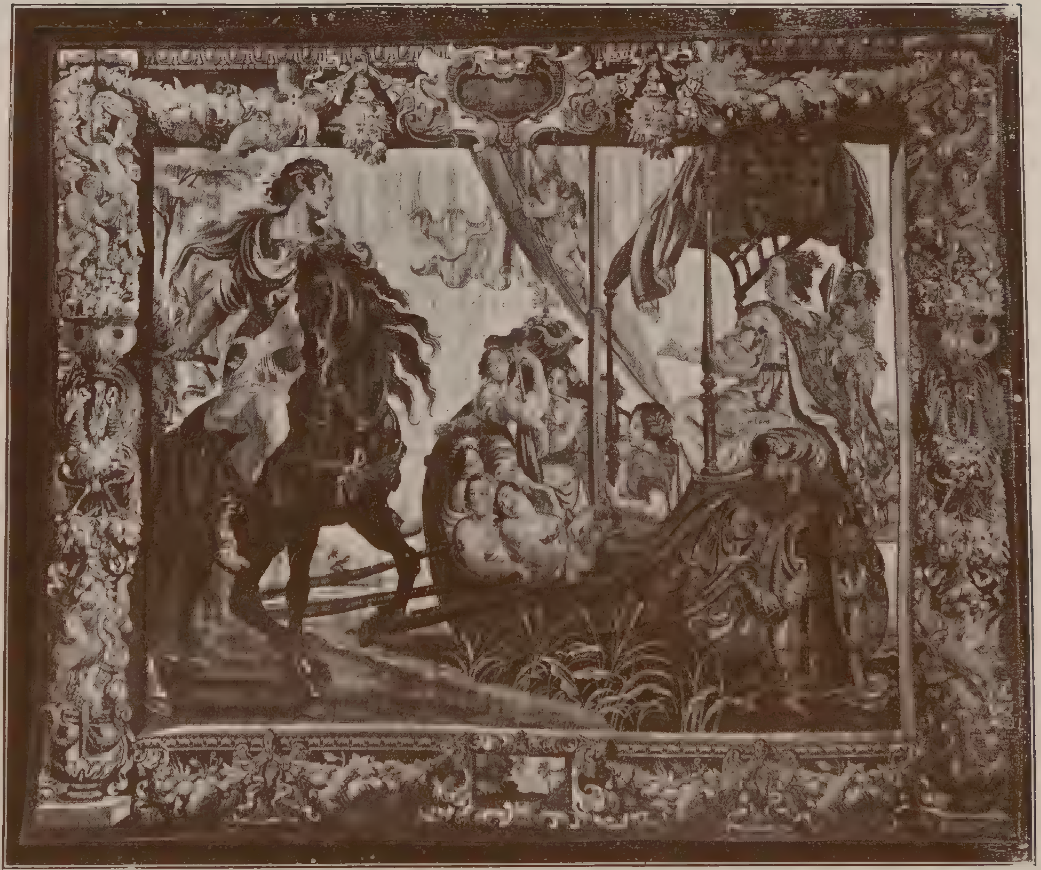
All these things resulted in constantly increasing restrictions by the guild of tapissiers and by order of royal patrons. But fraud is hard to suppress when the animus of the perpetrator is wrong. Laws were made to stop one fault after another, until in the end the weavers were so hampered by regulations that work was robbed of all enthusiasm or originality.

It was at this time that Brussels adopted the low-warp loom. In other words, after a brilliant period of prolific and beautiful production, Brussels began to show signs of deterioration. Her hour of triumph was past. It had been more brilliant than any preceding, and later times were never able to touch the same note of purity coupled with perfection. The reason for the decline is known, but reasons are of scant interest in the face of the deplorable fact of decadence.

The Italian method of drawing cartoons was adopted by the Flemish cartoonists at this time, but as it was an adoption and not a natural expression of inborn talent, it fell short of the high standard of the Renaissance. But that is not to say that we of to-day are not ready to worship the fruit of the Italian graft on Flemish talent. A tapestry belonging to the Institute of Art in Chicago well represents this hybrid expression of drawing. (Plate facing page 78.) The principal figures are inspired by such as are seen in the *Mercury* of Mr. Blumenthal's collection, or the *Vertumnus and Pomona* series, but there



BRUSSELS TAPESTRY. LATE SIXTEENTH CENTURY
Weaver, Jacques Geubels. Institute of Art, Chicago



MEETING OF ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

Brussels Tapestry. Woven by Gerard van den Strecken. Cartoon attributed to Rubens the artist stopped and wandered off into his traditional Flemish landscape with proper Flemings in the background dressed in the fashion of the artist's day.

The border was evidently inspired by Raphael's classic figures and arabesques, but the column of design is naïvely broken by the far perspective of a formal garden. The Italian cartoonist would have built his border, figure and arabesque, one above another like a fantastic column. (*vide* Mr. Blumenthal's *Mercury* border.) The Fleming saw but the intricacy, the multiplied detail, but missed the intellectual harmony. But, such trifles apart, the Flemish examples of this style that have come to us are thrilling in their beauty of colour, and borders such as this are an infinite joy. This tapestry was woven about the last quarter of the Sixteenth Century by a weaver named Jacques Geubels of Brussels, who was employed by Carlier, a merchant of Antwerp.

As the fruit of the Renaissance graft on Flanders coarsened and deteriorated, a new influence arose in the Low Countries, one that was bound to submerge all others. Rubens appeared and spread his great decorative surfaces before eyes that were tired of hybrid design. This great scene-painter introduced into all Europe a new method in his voluptuous, vigorous work, a method especially adapted to tapestry weaving. It is not for us to quarrel with the art of so great a master. The critics of painting scarce do that; but in the lesser art of tapestry the change brought about by his cartoons was not a happy one.

His great dramatic scenes required to be copied directly from the canvas, no liberty of line or colour could be allowed the weaver. In times past, the tapissier—with talent almost as great as that of the cartoonist—altered at his discretion. Even he to whom the Raphael cartoons were entrusted changed here and there the work of the master.

But now he was expected to copy without license for change. In other words, the time was arriving when tapestries were changing from decorative fabrics into paintings in wool. It takes courage to avow a distaste for the newer method, seeing what rare and beautiful hangings it has produced. But after a study of the purely decorative hangings of Gothic and Renaissance work, how forced and false seem the later gods. The value of the tapestries is enormous, they are the work of eminent men—but the heart turns away from them and revels again in the Primitives and the Italians of the Cinque Cento.

Repining is of little avail. The mode changes and tastes must change with it. If the gradual decadence after the Renaissance was deplorable, it was well that a Rubens rose in vigour to set a new and vital copy. To meet new needs, more tones of colour and yet more, were required by the weaver, and thus came about the making of woven pictures.

As one picture is worth many pages of description, it were well to observe the examples given (plate facing page 79) of the superb set of *Antony and Cleopatra,* a series of designs attributed to Rubens, executed in Brussels by Gerard van den Strecken. This set is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

CHAPTER VIII

ITALY

FIFTEENTH THROUGH SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

THE history of tapestry in Italy is the story of the great families, their romances and achievements. These families were those which furnished rulers of provinces—kings, almost—which supplied popes as well, and folk who thought a powerful man's pleasurable duty was to interest himself seriously in the arts.

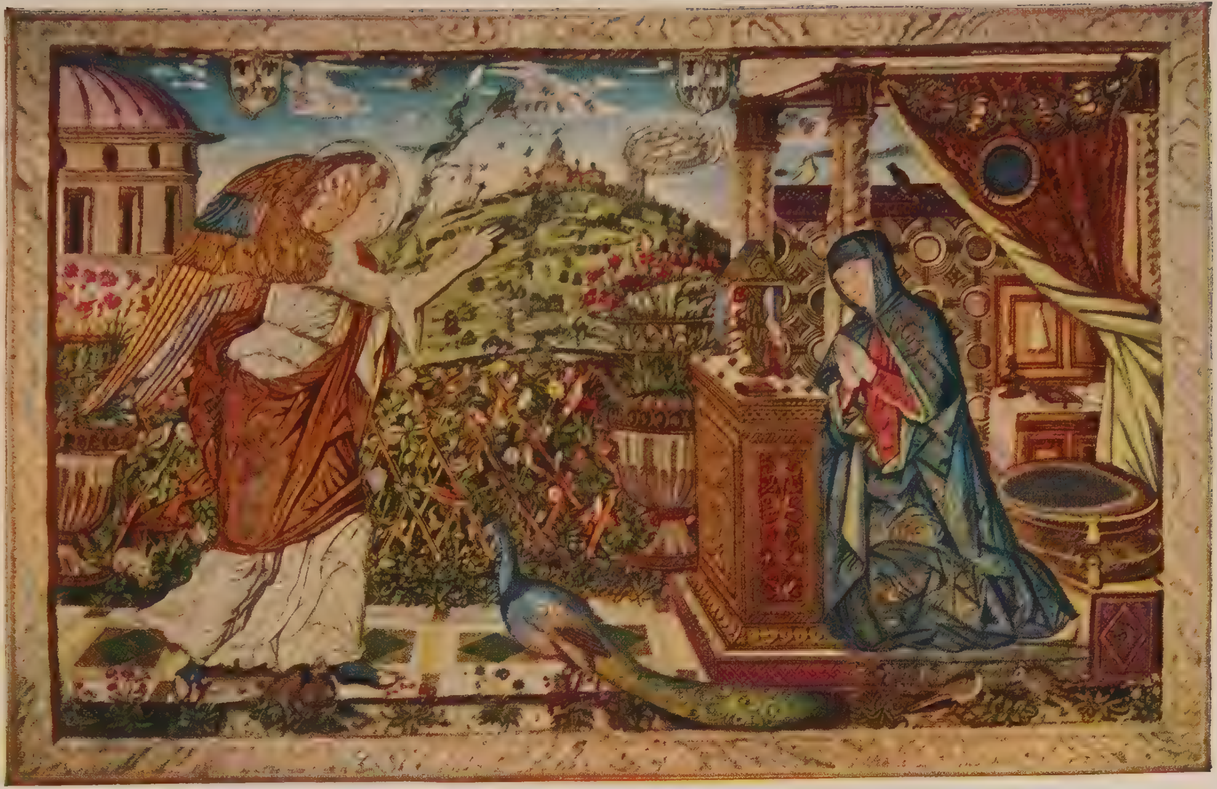
With the fine arts all held within her hand, it was but logical that Italy should herself begin to produce the tapestries she was importing from the land of the barbarians as those beyond her northern borders were arrogantly called. First among the records is found the name of the Gonzaga family which called important Flemish weavers down to Mantua, and there wove designs of Mantegna, in the highest day of their factory's production, about 1450.

Duke Frederick of Urbino is one of the early Italian patrons of tapestry whose name is made unforgettable in this connexion by the product of the factory he established toward the end of the Fifteenth Century, at his court in the little duchy which included only the space reaching from the Apennines to the Adriatic and from Rimini to Ancona. The chief work of this factory was the *History of Troy* which cost the generous and enthusiastic duke a hundred thousand dollars.

The great d'Este family was one to follow persistently the art, possibly because it habited the northern part of the peninsula and was therefore nearer Flanders, but more probably because the great Duke of Ferrara was animated by that superb pride of race that chafes at rivalry; this, added to a wish to encourage art, and the lust of possession which characterised the great men of that day.

It was the middle of the Sixteenth Century that Ercole II, the head of the d'Este family, revived at Ferrara the factory of his family which had suffered from the wars. The master-weavers were brought from Flanders, not only to produce tapestries almost unequalled for technical perfection, but to instruct local weavers. These two important weavers were Nicholas and John Karcher or Carcher as it is sometimes spelled, names of great renown—for a weaver might be almost as well known and as highly esteemed as the artist of the cartoons in those days when artisan's labour had not been despised by even the great Leonardo. The foremost artist of the Ferrara works was chosen from that city, Battista Dosso, but also active as designer was the Fleming, Lucas Cornelisz. In Dosso's work is seen that exquisite and dainty touch that characterises the artists of Northern Italy in their most perfect period, before voluptuous masses and heavy scroll-like curves prevailed even in the drawing of the human figure.

The House of Este had a part to play in the visit of the Emperor Charles V when he elected to be crowned with Lombardy's Iron Crown, in 1530, at Bologna instead of in the cathedral at Monza where the relic has its home. "Crowns run after me; I do not run after them," he said,



THE ANNUNCIATION

Italian Tapestry. Fifteenth Century. Collection of Martin A. Ryerson, Esq., Chicago

with the arrogance of success. At this reception at Bologna we catch a glimpse of the brilliant Isabella d'Este amid all the magnificence of the occasion. It takes very little imagination to picture the effect of the public square at Bologna—the same buildings that stand to-day—the square of the Palazzo Publico and the Cathedral—to fancy these all hung with the immense woven pictures with high lights of silk and gold glowing in the sun, and through this magnificent scene the procession of mounted guards, of beautiful ladies, of church dignitaries, with Charles V as the central object of pomp, wearing as a clasp to the cope of state the great diamond found on the field of Marat after the defeat of the Duke of Burgundy. The members of the House of Este were there with their courts and their protégés, their artists and their literati, as well as with their display of riches and gaiety.

The manufactory at Ferrara was now allowed to sell to the public, so great was its success, and to it is owed the first impetus given to the weaving in Italy and the production of some of the finest hangings which time has left for us to enjoy to-day. It is a sad commentary on man's lust of novelty that the factory at Ferrara was ultimately abandoned by reason of the introduction into the country of the brilliant metal-illuminated leathers of Cordova. The factory's life was comprised within the space of the years 1534 to 1597, the years in which lived Ercole II and Alfonso II, the two dukes of the House of Este who established and continued it.

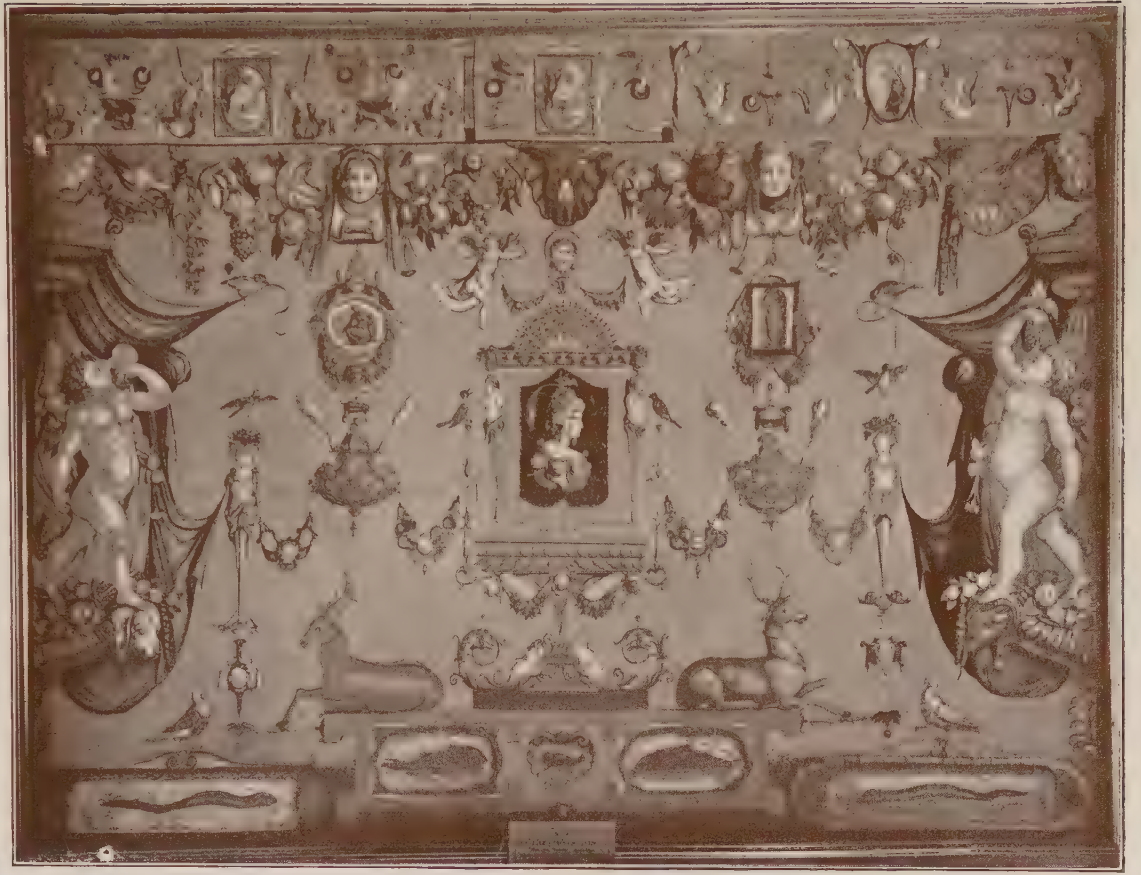
It was but little wonder that the great family of the

Medici looked with envious eyes on any innovation or success which distinguished a family which so nearly approached in importance its own. When Ercole d'Este had fully proved the perfection of his new industry, the weaving of tapestry, one of the Medici established for himself a factory whereby he, too, might produce this form of art, not only for the furtherance of the art, but to supply his own insatiable desires for possession.

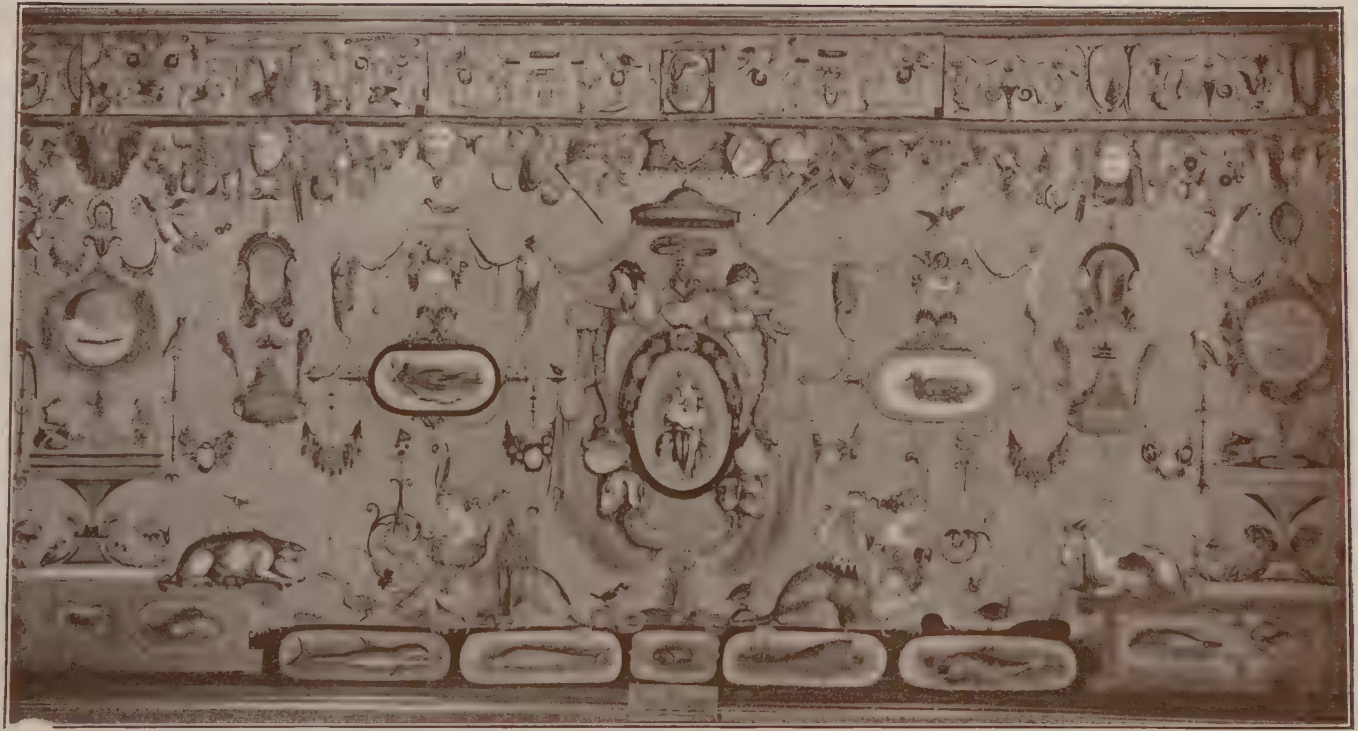
The *Arazzeria Medicea* was the direct result of the jealousy of Cosimo I, Grand Duke of Tuscany, 1537–1574. It was established in Florence with a success to be anticipated under such powerful protection, and it endured until that patronage was removed by the extinction of the family in 1737.

It was to be expected that the artists employed were those of note, yet in the general result, outside of delicate grotesques, the drawing is more or less the far-away echo of greater masters whose faults are reproduced, but whose inspiration is not obtainable. After Michael Angelo, came a passion for over-delineation of over-developed muscles; after Raphael—came the debased followers of his favourite pupil, Giulio Romano, who had himself seized all there was of the carnal in Raphael's genius. But if there is something to be desired in the composition and line of the cartoons of the Florentine factory, there is nothing lacking in the consummate skill of the weavers.

The same Nicholas Karcher who set the standard in the d'Este works, gave of his wonderful skill to the Florentines, and with him was associated John Rost. These



ITALIAN TAPESTRY. MIDDLE OF SIXTEENTH CENTURY
Cartoon by Bacchiacca. Woven by Nicolas Karcher



ITALIAN TAPESTRY. MIDDLE OF SIXTEENTH CENTURY
Cartoon by Bacchiacca. Woven by G. Rost

were both from Flanders, and although trade regulations for tapestry workers did not exist in Italy, Duke Cosimo granted each of these men a sufficient salary, a habitat, as well as permission to work for outsiders, and in addition paid them for all work executed for himself.

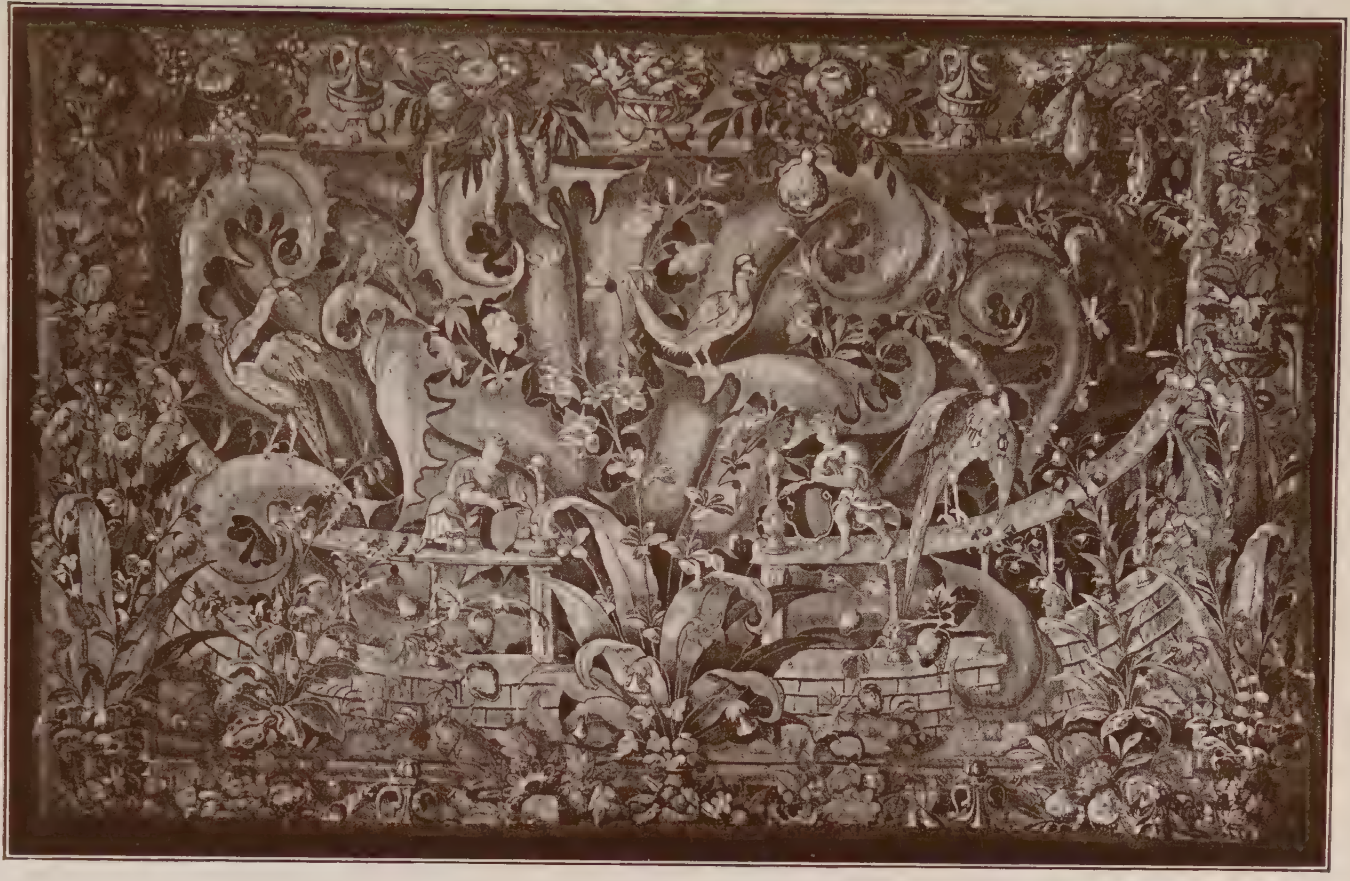
The subjects for the set of tapestries had entirely left the old method of pious interpretation and of mediæval allegory and revelled in pictured tales of the Scriptures and of the gods and heroes of mystical Parnassus and of bellicose Greece, not forgetting those dainty exquisite impossibilities called grotesques. It was about the time of the death of Cosimo I (1574), the founder of the Medicean factory, that a new and unfortunate influence came into the directorship of the designs. This was the appointment of Stradano or Johan van der Straaten, to give his Flemish name, as dominating artist.

He was a man without fine artistic feeling, one of those whose eye delighted in the exaggerations of decadence rather than in the restraint of perfect art. He was inspired, not by past perfection of the Italians among whom he came to live, but by those of the decline, and on this he grafted a bit of Northern philistinism. His brush was unfortunately prolific, and at this time the fine examples of weaving set by Rost and Karcher had been replaced by quicker methods so that after 1600 the tapestries poured out were lamentably inferior. Florentine tapestry had at this time much pretence, much vulgar display in its drawing, missing the fine virtues of the time when Cosimo I dictated its taste, the fine virtues of "grace, gaiety and reflectiveness."

Leo X, the great Medicean pope, was elected in 1513, he who ordered the great Raphael set of the *Acts of the Apostles,* but it was before the establishment of important looms in Italy, so to Flanders and Van Aelst are due the glory of first producing this series which afterward was repeated many times in the great looms of Europe. Leo X emulated in the patronage of the arts his father Lorenzo, well-named Magnificent. What Lorenzo did in Florence, Leo X endeavoured to do in Rome; make of his time and of his city the highest expression of culture. His record, however, is so mixed with the corruption of the time that its golden glory is half-dimmed. It was from the licentiousness of cardinals and the wanton revels of the Vatican in Leo's time that young Luther the "barbarian" fled with horror to nail up his thesis on the doors of the churches in Wittenberg.

The history of tapestry in Italy at the Seventeenth Century was all in the hands of the great families. Italy was not united under a single royal head, but was a heterogeneous mass of dukedoms, of foreign invaders, with the popes as the head of all. But Italy had experienced a time of papal corruption, which had, as its effect, wars of disintegration, the retarding of that unity of state which has only recently been accomplished. State patronage for the factories was not known, that steady beneficent influence, changeless through changing reigns. Popes and great families regulated art in all its manifestations, and who shall say that envy and rivalry did not act for its advancement.

The desire to imitate the cultivation and elegance of



ITALIAN VERDURE. SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Italy was what made returning invaders carry the Renaissance into the rest of Europe; and in a lesser degree the process was reversed when, in the Seventeenth Century, a cardinal of the House of Barberini visited France and, on viewing in the royal residences a superb display of tapestries, his envy and ambition were aroused to the extent of emulation. He could not, with all his power, possess himself of the hangings that he saw, but he could, and did, arrange to supply himself generously from another source. He was the powerful Francesco Barberini, the son of the pope's brother (Pope Urban VIII, 1623–1644), and it was he who established the Barberini Library and built from the ruins of Rome's amphitheatres and baths the great palace which to-day still dominates the street winding up to its aristocratic elegance. It was to adorn this palace that Cardinal Francesco established ateliers and looms and set artists and weavers to work. This tapestry factory is of especial interest to America, for some of its chief hangings have come to rest with us. *The Mysteries of the Life and Death of Jesus Christ,* one set is called, and is the property of the Cathedral of St. John, the Divine, in New York, donated by Mrs. Clarke.

Cardinal Francesco Barberini chose as his artists those of the school of Pietro di Cortona with Giovanni Francesco Romanelli as the head master. The director of the factory was Giacomo della Riviera allied with M. Wauters, the Fleming.[1] The former was especially concerned with the pieces now owned by the Cathedral of

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[1] E. Müntz, "La Tapisserie."

St. John, the Divine, in New York, and which are signed with his name. Romanelli was the artist of the cartoons, and his fame is almost too well known to dwell upon. His portrait, in tapestry, hangs in the Louvre, for in Paris he gained much fame at the Court of Louis XIV, where he painted portraits of the Grand Monarch, who never wearied of seeing his own magnificence fixed on canvas.

It was the hard fate of the Barberini family to lose power and wealth after the death of their powerful member, Pope Urban VIII, in 1644. Their wealth and influence were the shining mark for the arrows of envy, so it was to be expected that when the next pope, Innocent X, was elected, they were robbed of riches and driven out of the country into France. This ended for a time the work of the tapestry factory, but later the family returned and work was resumed to the extent of weaving a superb series picturing scenes especially connected with the glory of the family, and entitled *History of Urban VIII.*

Although Italy is growing daily in power and riches under her new policy of political unity, there were dreary years of heavy expense and light income for many of her famous families, and it was during such an era that the Barberini family consented to let their tapestries pass out from the doors of the palace they were woven to decorate. In 1889, the late Charles M. Ffoulke, Esq., became the possessor of all the Barberini hangings, and added them to his famous collection. Thus through the enterprise and the fine artistic appreciation of Mr.

Ffoulke, is America able to enjoy the best expression of Italian tapestry of the Seventeenth Century.

The part that Venice ever played in the history of tapestry is the splendid one of consumer. In her Oriental magnificence she exhibited in palace and pageant the superb products of labour which others had executed. Without tapestries her big stone palaces would have lacked the note of soft luxury, without coloured hangings her balconies would have been but dull settings for languid ladies, and her water-parades would have missed the wondrous colour that the Venetian loves. Yet to her rich market flowed the product of Europe in such exhaustless stream that she became connoisseur-consumer only, nor felt the need of serious producing. Workshops there were, from time to time, but they were as easily abandoned as they were initiated, and they have left little either to history or to museums. Venice was, in the Sixteenth Century, not only a buyer of tapestries for her own use, but one of the largest markets for the sale of hangings to all Europe. Men and monarchs from all Christendom went there to purchase. The same may be said of Genoa, so that although these two cities had occasional unimportant looms, their position was that of middleman—vendors of the works of others. In addition to this they were repairers and had ateliers for restoring, even in those days.

CHAPTER IX

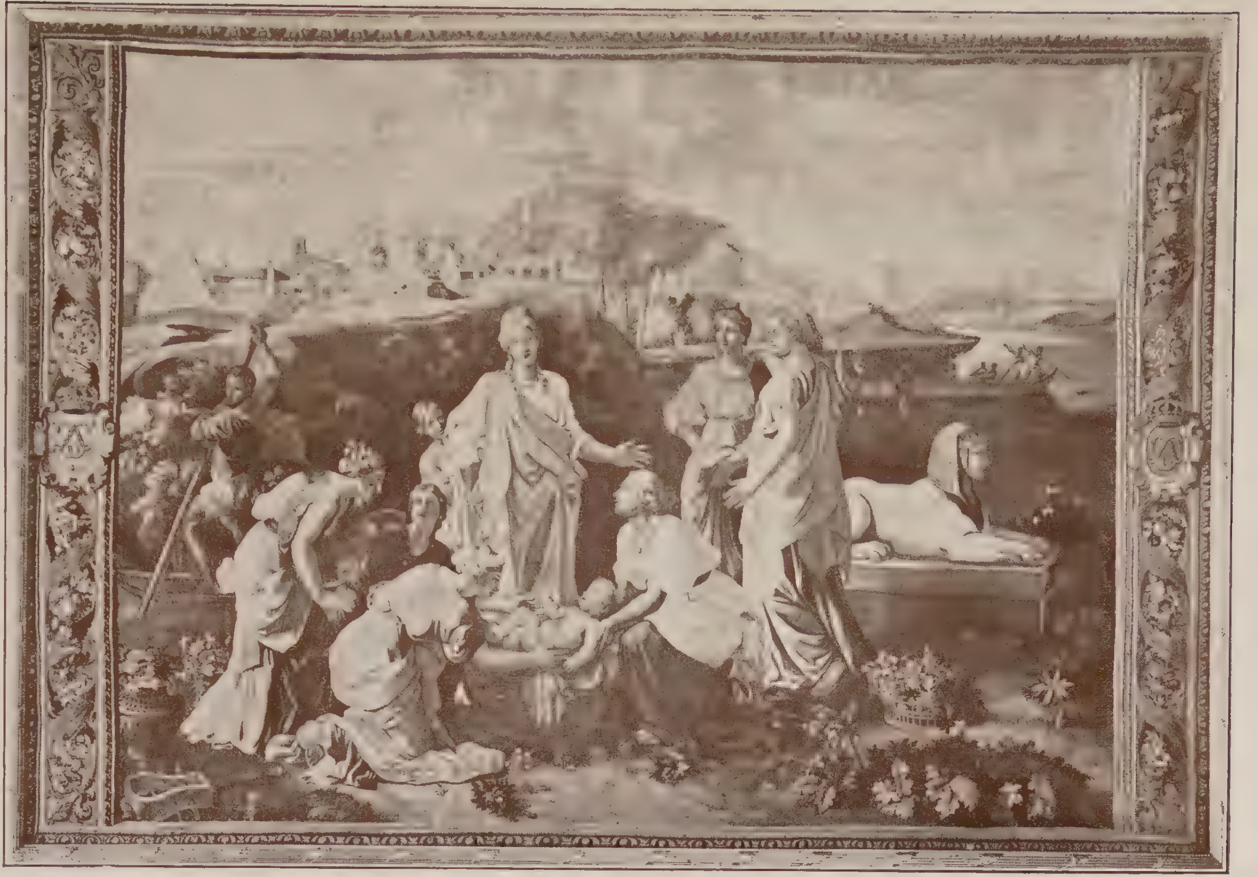
FRANCE

WORKING UP TO GOBELINS FACTORY

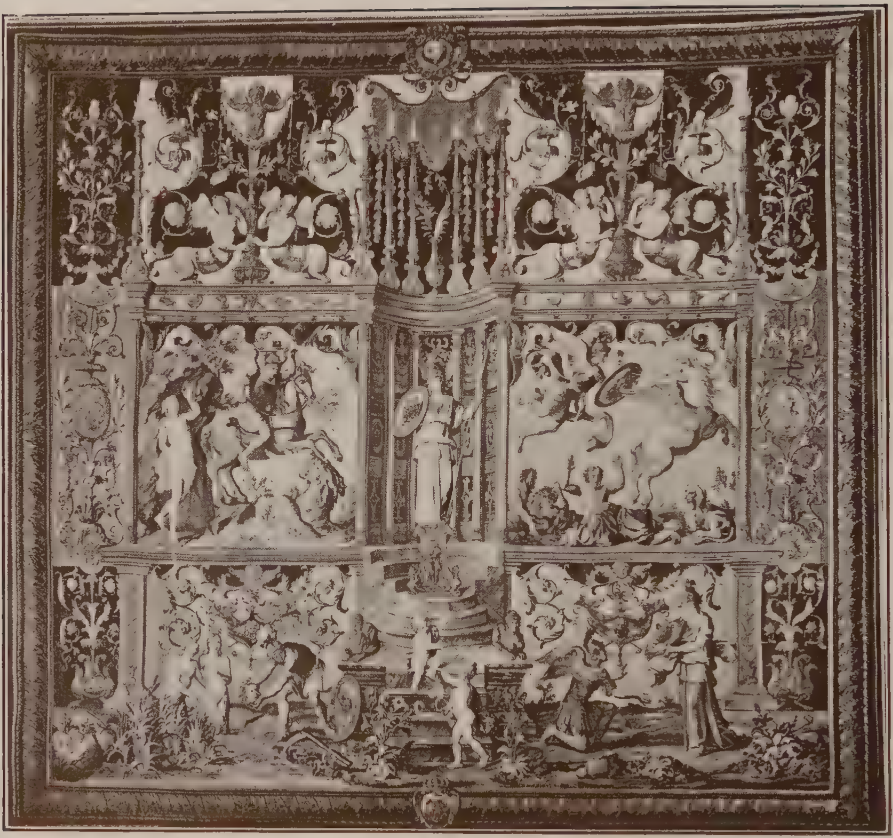
IN following the great sweep of tapestry production we arrive now in France, there to stay until the Revolution. The early beginnings were there, briefly rivalling Arras, but Arras, as we have seen, caught up the industry with greater zeal and became the ever-famous leader of the Fifteenth Century, ceding to Brussels in the Sixteenth Century, whence the high point of perfection was carried to Paris and caused the establishment of the Gobelins. The English development under James I, we defer for a later considering.

Francis I stands, an over-dressed, ever ambitious figure, at the beginning of things modern in French art. He still smacks of the Middle Ages in many a custom, many a habit of thought; his men clank in armour, in his châteaux lurk the suggestion of the fortress, and his common people are sunk in a dark and hopeless oppression. Yet he himself darts about Europe with a springing gait and an elegant manner, the type of the strong aristocrat dispensing alike arts of war and arts of the Renaissance.

Was it his visits, bellicose though they were, to Italy and Spain, that turned his observant eye to the luxury of woven story and made him desire that France should produce the same? The Sforza Castle at Milan had walls enough of tapestry, the pageants of Leonardo da Vinci,



THE FINDING OF MOSES
Gobelins, Seventeenth Century. Cartoon after Poussin. The Louvre Museum



TRIUMPH OF JUNO
Gobelins under Louis XIV.

organised at royal command of the lovely Beatrice d'Este, displayed the wealth of woven beauty over which Francis had time to deliberate in those bad hours after the battle at Milan's noted neighbour, Pavia.

The attention of Francis was also turned much to Spain through envy of that extraordinary man of luck and ability, the Emperor Charles V, and from whom he made abortive and sullen efforts to wrest Germany, Italy, anything he could get. In his imprisonment in Madrid, Francis had time in plenty on which to think of many things, and why not on the wonderful tapestries of which Spain has always had a collection to make envious the rest of Europe. He might forget his two poor little boys who were left as hostages on his release, but he forgot not whatever contributes to the pleasure of life. That peculiarity was one which was yielding luscious fruit, however, for Francis was the bearer of the torch of the Renaissance which was to illumine France with the same fire that flashed and glowed over Italy. This is a fact to remember in regard to the class of designs of his own and succeeding periods in France.

How he got his ideas we can reasonably trace, and the result of them was that he established a royal tapestry factory in beautiful Fontainebleau, which lies hid in grateful shade, stretching to flowered fields but a reasonable distance from the distractions of Paris.

It pleased Francis—and perhaps the beautiful Diane de Poitiers and Duchesse d'Étampes—to critique plays in that tiny gem of a theatre at the palace, or to feed the carp in the pool; but also it gave him pleasure to wander into the rooms where the high-warp looms lifted their utilitarian lengths and artists played at magic with the wools.

Alas, one cannot dress this patronage of art with too much of disinterestedness, for these marvellous weavings were for the adornment of the apartments of the very persons who caused their productions.

The grand idea of state ateliers had not yet come to bless the industry. For this reason the factory at Fontainebleau outlasted the reign of its founder, Francis I, but a short time.

Nevertheless, examples of its works are still to be seen and are of great beauty, notably those at the Museum of the Gobelins in Paris. That a series called the *History of Diana* was produced is but natural, considering the puissance at court of the famous Diane de Poitiers.

When Francis' son, Henri II, enfeebled in constitution by the Spanish confinement, inherited the throne, it was but natural that he should neglect the indulgences of his father and prefer those of his own. The Fontainebleau factory strung its looms and copied its cartoons and produced, too, certain hangings for Henri's wife, the terrible Catherine de Medici, on which her vicious eyes rested in forming her horrid plots; but Henri had ambitions of his own, small ambitions beside those which had to do with jealousy of Charles Quint. He let the factory of Francis I languish, but carried on the art under his own name and fame.

To give his infant industry a home he looked about Paris and decided upon the Hôpital de la Trinité, an institution where asylum was found for the orphans of the city who seem, in the light of the general brutality of the time, to have been even in more need of a home than the parentless child of modern civilisation. A part of the scheme was to employ in the works such children as were sufficiently mature and clever to work and to learn at least the auxiliary details of a craft that is also an art.

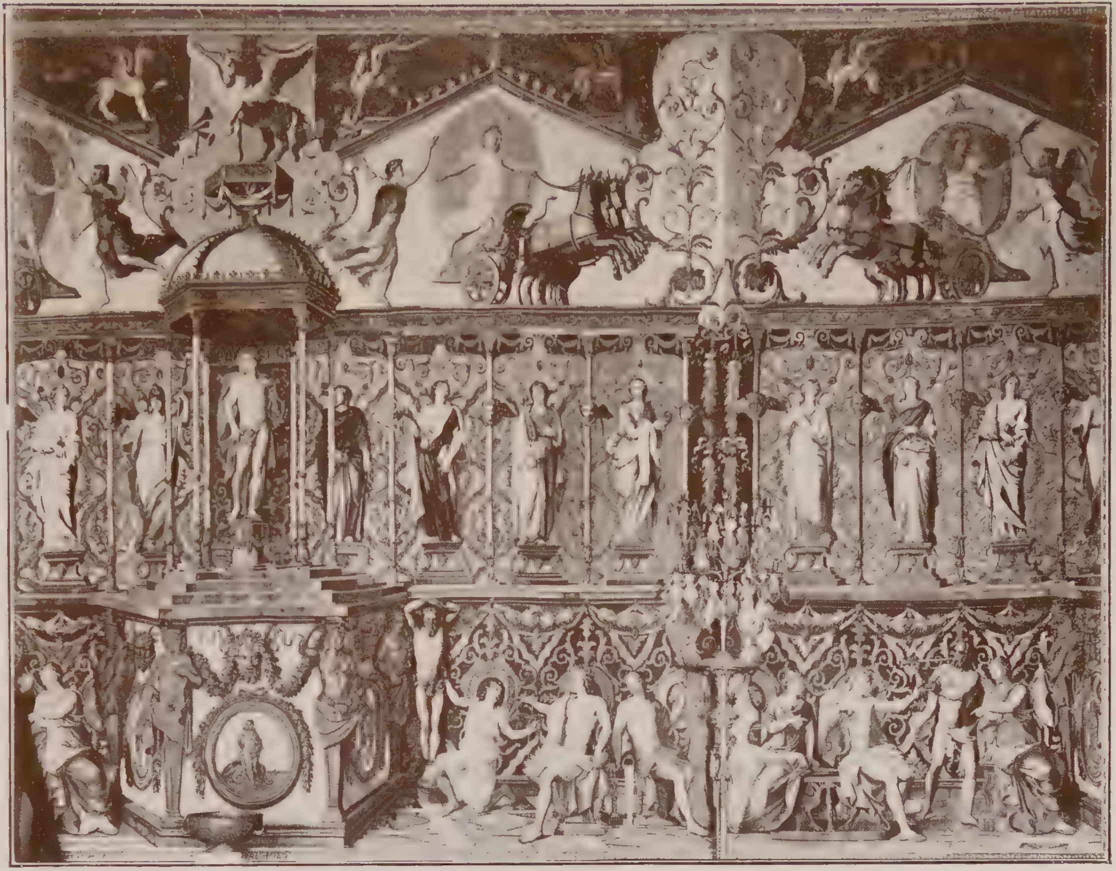
In this way the sixty or so of the orphans of La Trinité were given a means of earning a livelihood. Among them was one whose name became renowned. This was Maurice du Bourg, whose tapestries surpassed all others of his time in this factory—an important factory, as being one of the group that later was merged into the Gobelins.

It must be remembered in identifying French tapestries of this kind that things Gothic had been vanquished by the new fashion of things Renaissance, and that all models were Italian. Giulio Romano and his school of followers were the mode in France, not only in drawing, but in the revival of classic subject. This condition in the art world found expression in a set of tapestries from the factory of La Trinité that are sufficiently celebrated to be set down in the memory with an underscoring. This set was composed of fifteen pieces illustrating in sweeping design and gorgeous colouring the *History of Mausolus and Artemisia.* Intense local and personal interest was given to the set by making an open secret of the fact that by Artemisia, the Queen of Halicarnassus, was meant the widowed Queen of France, Catherine de Medici, who adored posing as the most famous of widows and adding ancient glory to her living importance. To this *History* French writers accord the important place of inspirer of a distinctively French Renaissance.

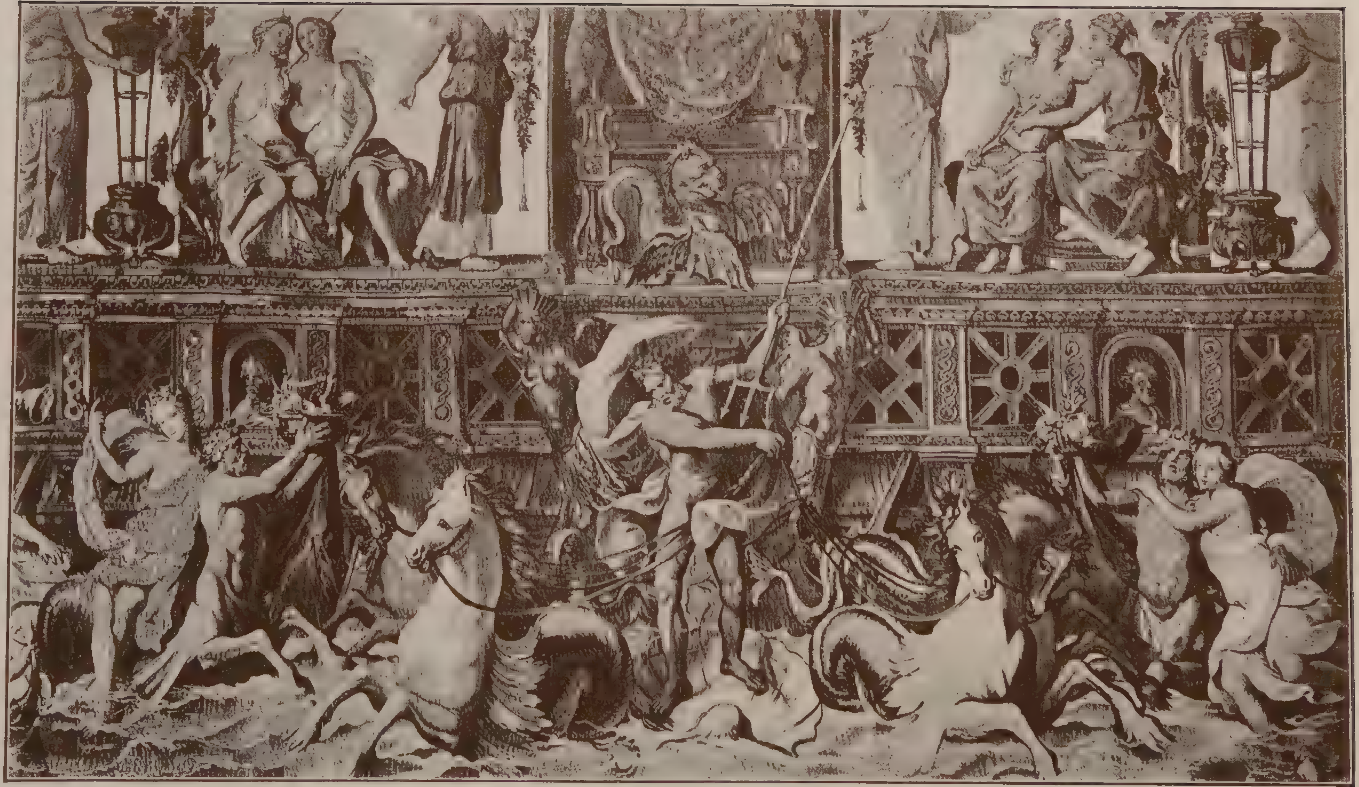
The weaver being Maurice du Bourg, the chief of the factory of La Trinité, the artists were Henri Lerambert and Antoine Carron, but the set has been many times copied in various factories, and Artemisia has symbolised in turn two other widowed queens of France.

Into the throne of France climbed wearily a feeble youth always under the influence of his mother, Catherine de Medici; and then it was filled by two other incapable and final Orleans monarchs, until at last by virtue of inheritance and sword, it became the seat of that grand and faulty Henri IV, King of Navarre. By fighting he got his place, and the habit being strong upon him, he was in eternal conflict. Some there be who are developed by sympathy, but Henri IV was developed by opposition, and thus it was that although opposed in the matter by his Prime Minister, Sully, he established factories for the weaving of tapestries in both high and low warps.

With the desire to see the arts of peace instead of evidences of war throughout his kingdom just rescued from conflict, he took all means to set his people in the ways of pleasing industry. The indefatigable Sully was plucking the royal sleeve to follow the path of the plough, to see man's salvation, material and moral, in the ways of agriculture. But Henri favoured townspeople as



TRIUMPH OF THE GODS (DETAIL)
Gobelins, Seventeenth Century



TRIUMPH OF THE GODS (DETAIL)
Gobelins Tapestry

well as country people, and with the Edict of Nantes, releasing from the bondage of terror a large number of workers, he showed much industry in encouraging tapestry factories in and near Paris, and as these all lead to Gobelins we will consider them.

Henri IV, notwithstanding his Prime Minister Sully's opposition to what he considered a favouring of vicious luxury, began to occupy himself in tapestry factories as early in his reign as his people could rise from the wounds of war. Taking his movements chronologically we will begin with his establishment in 1597 (eight years after this first Bourbon took the throne) of a high-warp industry in the house of the Jesuits in the Faubourg St. Antoine, associating here Du Bourg of La Trinité and Laurent, equally renowned. and the composer of the St. Merri tapestries.[1]

Flemish workers in Paris were at this same time, about 1601, encouraged by the king and under protection of his steward. These Flemings were the nucleus of a great industry, for it was over them that two famous masters governed, namely, François de la Planche and Marc Comans or Coomans. In 1607 Henri IV established the looms which these men were called upon to direct.

These two Flemings, great in their art, were men of family and of some means, for their first venture in the manufacture of tapestry was a private enterprise like any of to-day. They looked to themselves to produce the money for the support of the industry. Combining

[1] For the facts here cited see E. Müntz, "Histoire de la Tapisserie," and Jules Guiffrey, "Les Gobelins."

qualities of both the artist and the business man, they took on apprentices and also established looms in the provinces (notably Tours and Amiens) where commercialism was as prominent as in modern methods; that is to say, that by turning off a lot of cheaper work for smaller purses, a quick and ready market was found which supplied the money necessary for the production of those finer works of art which are left to delight us to-day.

This manner of procedure of De la Planche and Comans has an interest far deeper than the mere financial venture of the men of the early Seventeenth Century, because it forces upon us the fact that at that time, and earlier, no state ateliers existed. It was Henri IV who first saw the wisdom of using the public purse in advancing this industry. He established Du Bourg in the Louvre. With Henri Laurent he was placed in the Tuileries, in 1607, and that atelier lasted until the ministry of Colbert in the reign of Louis XIV.

In about 1627 the great De la Planche died and his son, Raphael, established ateliers of his own in the Faubourg St. Germain, turning out from his looms productions which were of sufficient excellence to be confused with those of his father's most profitable factory. Chronologically this fact belongs later, so we return to the influence of Henri IV and the master gentleman tapissiers, De la Planche and Comans.

The very name of the old palace, Les Tournelles, calls up a crowd of pictures: the death of Henri II at the tournament in honour of the marriage of his son with

Marie Stuart, the subsequent razing of this ancient home of kings by Catherine de Medici, and its reconstruction in its present form by Henri IV. It is here that Richelieu honoured the brief reign of Louis XIII by a statue, and it is here that Madame de Sévigné was born. But more to our purpose, it was here that, in 1607, Henri IV cast his kingly eye when establishing a certain tapestry factory. It was here he placed as directors the celebrated Comans and De la Planche. It happened in time, that the looms of Les Tournelles were moved to the Faubourg St. Marceau and these two men came in time to direct these and all other looms under royal patronage.

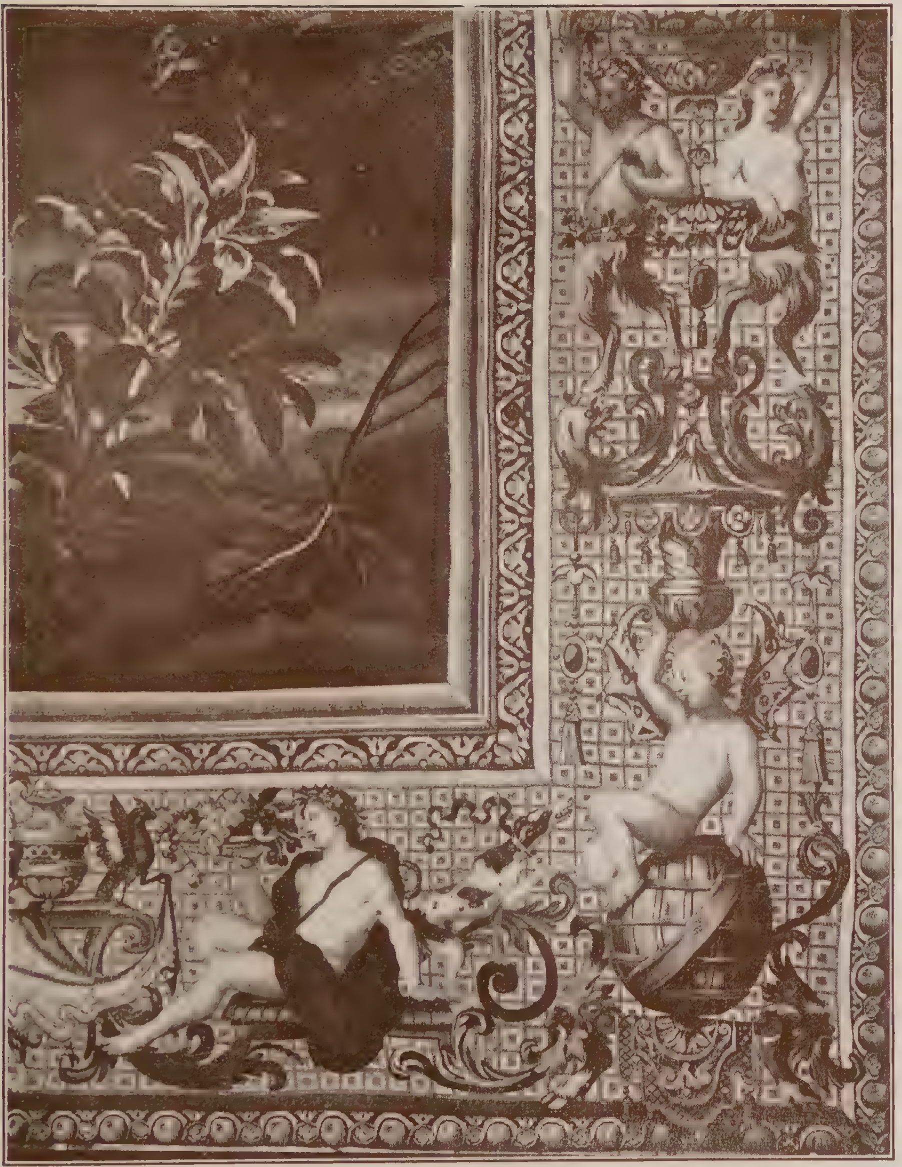
Examples are not wanting in museums of French work of this time, showing the development of the art and the progress that France was making under Henri IV, whose energy without limit, and whose interests without number, would to-day have given him the epithet of strenuous.

Under his reign we see the activity that so easily led France up to the point where all that was needed was the assembling of the factories under the direction of one great master. The factories flourishing under Henri IV were La Trinité, the Louvre, the Savonnerie, the Faubourg St. Marceau and one in the Tuileries. But it needed the power of Louis XIV to tie all together in the strength of unity.

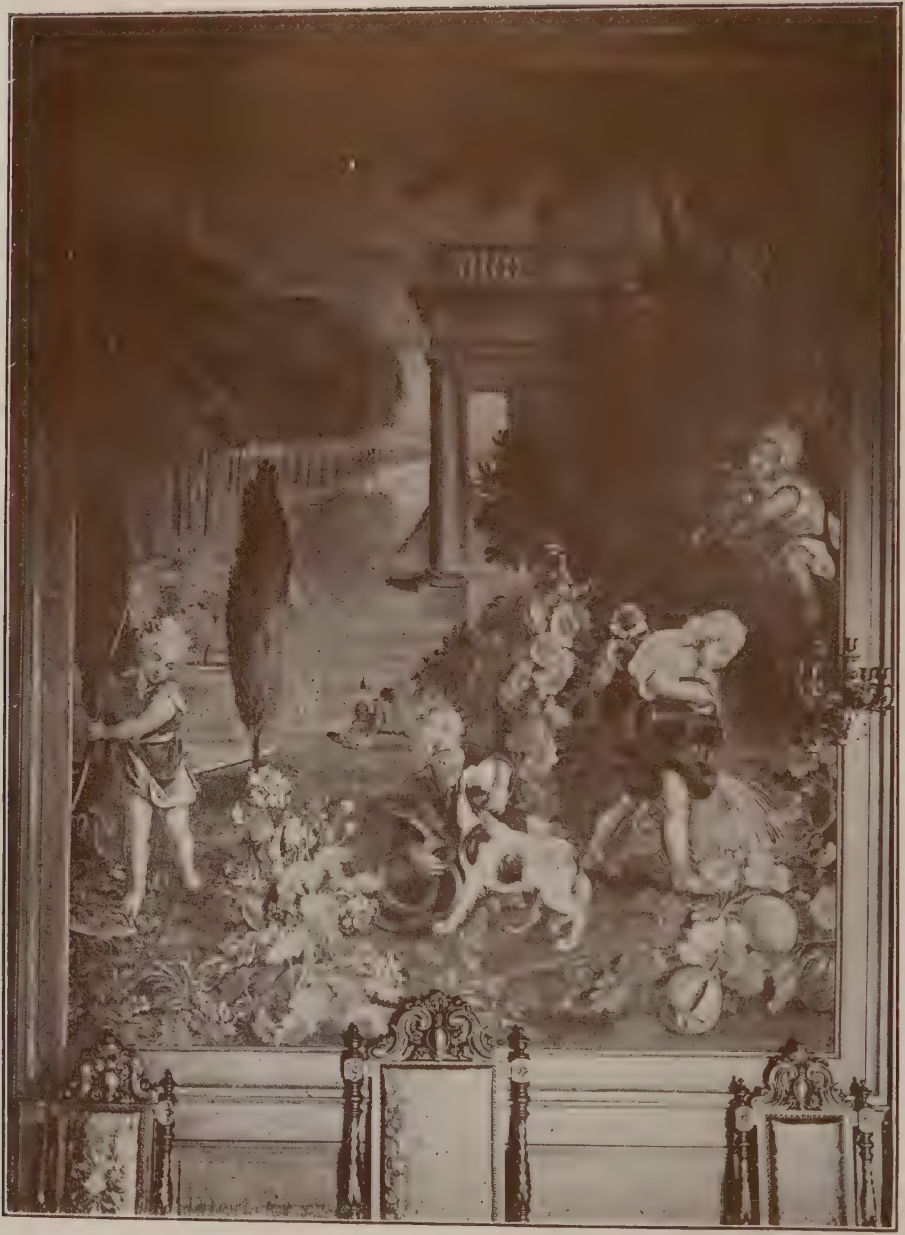
The assassin Ravaillac, fanatically muttering through the streets of Paris, alternately hiding and swaggering throughout the loveliest month of May, when he thrust his murderous dagger through the royal coach, not only gave a death blow to Henri IV, but to many of these industries that the king had cherished for his people against the opposition of his prime minister. The tale of tapestry is like a vine hanging on a frame of history, and frequent allusion therefore must be made to the tales of kings and their ministers.

As it is not always a monarch, but often the power behind the throne that rules, we see the force of Richelieu surging behind the reign of the suppressed Louis XIII, whose rule followed that of the regretted Henri IV. The master of the then new Palais Royale had minor interests of his own, apart from his generous plots of ruin for the Protestants, for all the French nobility, and for the House of Austria to which the queen belonged. Luxurious surroundings were a necessity to this man, refined in the arts of cruelty and of living. It was no wonder that under him tapestry weaving was not allowed to die, but was fostered until that day when the Grand Monarch would organise and perfect.

In 1643, Louis XIV came to the throne under the guidance of Anne of Austria, but it was many years before he was able to make his influence appreciable. Meanwhile, however, others were fostering the elegant industry. It was as early as 1647 that two celebrated tapestry weavers came to Paris from Italy. They were Pierre Lefèvre or Lefebvre and his son Jean. The first of these was the chief of a factory in Florence, whither he presently returned. Jean Lefebvre stayed in Paris, won his way all the better for being released from parental rule, and in time received the great honour of being appointed



GOBELINS BORDER (DETAIL) SEVENTEENTH CENTURY



CHILDREN GARDENING
After Charles Lebrun. Gobelins, Seventeenth Century. Chateau Henri Quatre, Pau

one of the directors of the Gobelins, when that factory was finally organised as an institution of the state.

During the regency of Louis XIV there were also factories outside of Paris. The high-warp looms of Tours were of such notable importance that the great Richelieu placed here an order for tapestries of great splendour with which to soften his hours of ease. Rheims Cathedral still harbours the fine hangings which were woven for the place they now adorn, an unusual circumstance in the world of tapestry. These hangings (*The Story of Christ*) were woven at Rheims, where the factory existed well known throughout the first half of the Seventeenth Century. The church had previously ordered tapestries from another town executed by one Daniel Pepersack, and so highly approved was his work that he was made director of the Rheims factory.[1]

A factory which lasted but a few years, yet has for us a special interest, is that of Maincy, founded in 1658. It is here that we hear of the great Colbert and of Lebrun, whose names are synonymous with prosperity of the Gobelins. For the factory at Maincy, Lebrun made cartoons of great beauty, notably that of *The Hunt of Meleager,* which now hangs in the Gobelins Museum in Paris. Louis Blamard was the director of the workmen, who were Flemish, and who were afterwards called to Paris to operate the looms of the newly-formed Gobelins, and the reason of the transference forms a part of the history of the great people of that day.

Richelieu in dying had passed over his power to Mazarin, who had used it with every cruelty possible to the day. He had coveted riches and elegance and had possessed himself of them; had collected in his palace the most beautiful works of art of his day or those of a previous time. After Mazarin came Foucquet, the great, the iconoclastic, the unfortunate.

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[1] See Loriquet, "Les Tapisseries de Notre Dame de Rheims."

It was at Foucquet's estate of Vaux near Maincy that this tapestry factory of short duration was established and soon destroyed. The powerful Superintendent of Finance, with his eye for the beautiful and desire for the luxury of kings, built for himself such a château as only the magnificence of that time produced. It was situated far enough from Paris to escape any sort of ennui, and was surrounded by gardens most marvellous, within a beauteous park. It lay, when finished, like a jewel on the fair bosom of France. The great superintendent conceived the idea of pleasing the young king, Louis XIV, by inviting the court for a wondrous fête in its lovely enclosure.

Foucquet was a man of the world, and of the court, knew how to please man's lighter side, and how to use social position for his own ends. France calls him a "dilapidateur," but when his power and incidentally the revenues of state, were laid out to produce a day of pleasure for king and court, his taste and ability showed such a fête as could scarce be surpassed even in those days of artistic fêtes champêtres.

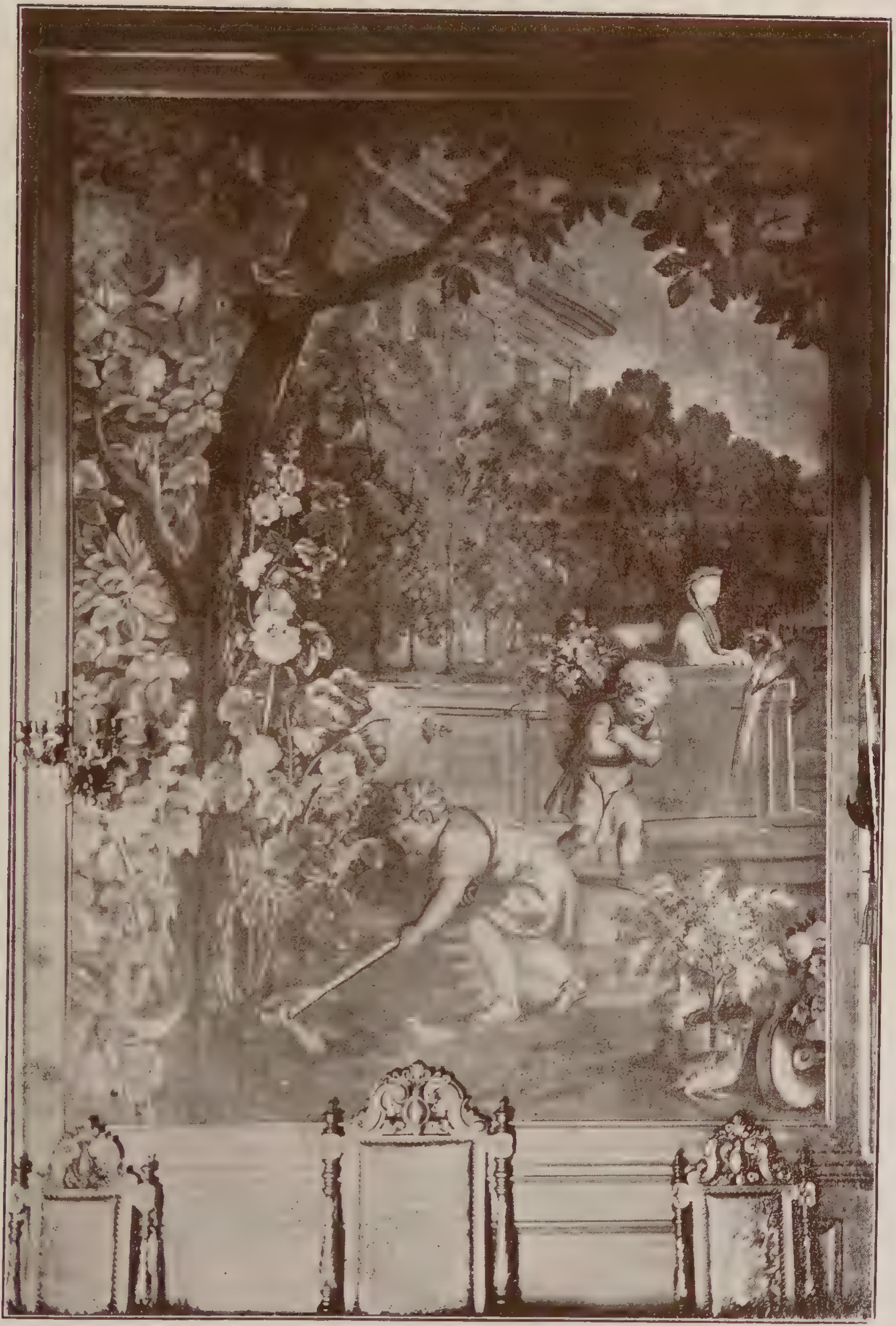
The great gardens were brought into use in all the beauty of flower and vine, of lawn and bosquet, of terrace and fountain. When the guests arrived, weary of town life, they were turned loose in the enchanting place like birds uncaged, and to the beauty of Nature was added that of folk as gaily dressed as the flowers. The king was invited to inspect it all for his pleasure, asked to feast in the gardens, and to repose in the splendid château.

He was young then, in the early twenties, and luxury was younger then than now, so he was pleased to spend the time in almost childish enjoyments. A play *al fresco* was almost a necessity to a royal garden party, which was no affair of an hour like ours in the busy to-day, but extended the livelong day and evening. Molière was ready with his sparkling satires at the king's caprice, and into the garden danced the players before an audience to whom vaudeville and *café chantant* were exclusively a royal novelty arranged for their delectation.

It is easy to see the elegant young king and his court in the setting of a sophisticated out-of-doors, wandering on grassy paths, lingering under arches of roses, plucking a flower to nest beside a smiling face, stopping where servants—obsequious adepts, they were then—supplied dainty things to eat and drink. Madame de Sevigné was there, she of the observant eye, an eye much occupied at this time with the figure of Superintendent Foucquet, the host of this glorious occasion. This gracious lady lacked none of the appearance of frivolity, coiffed in curls, draped in lace and soft silks, but her mind was deeply occupied with the signs of the times. All the elegance of the château, all the seductive beauty of terrace, garden, and bosquet, all the piquant surprises of play and pyrotechnics, what were they? Simply the disinterested effort of a subject to give pleasure to His Majesty, the King.

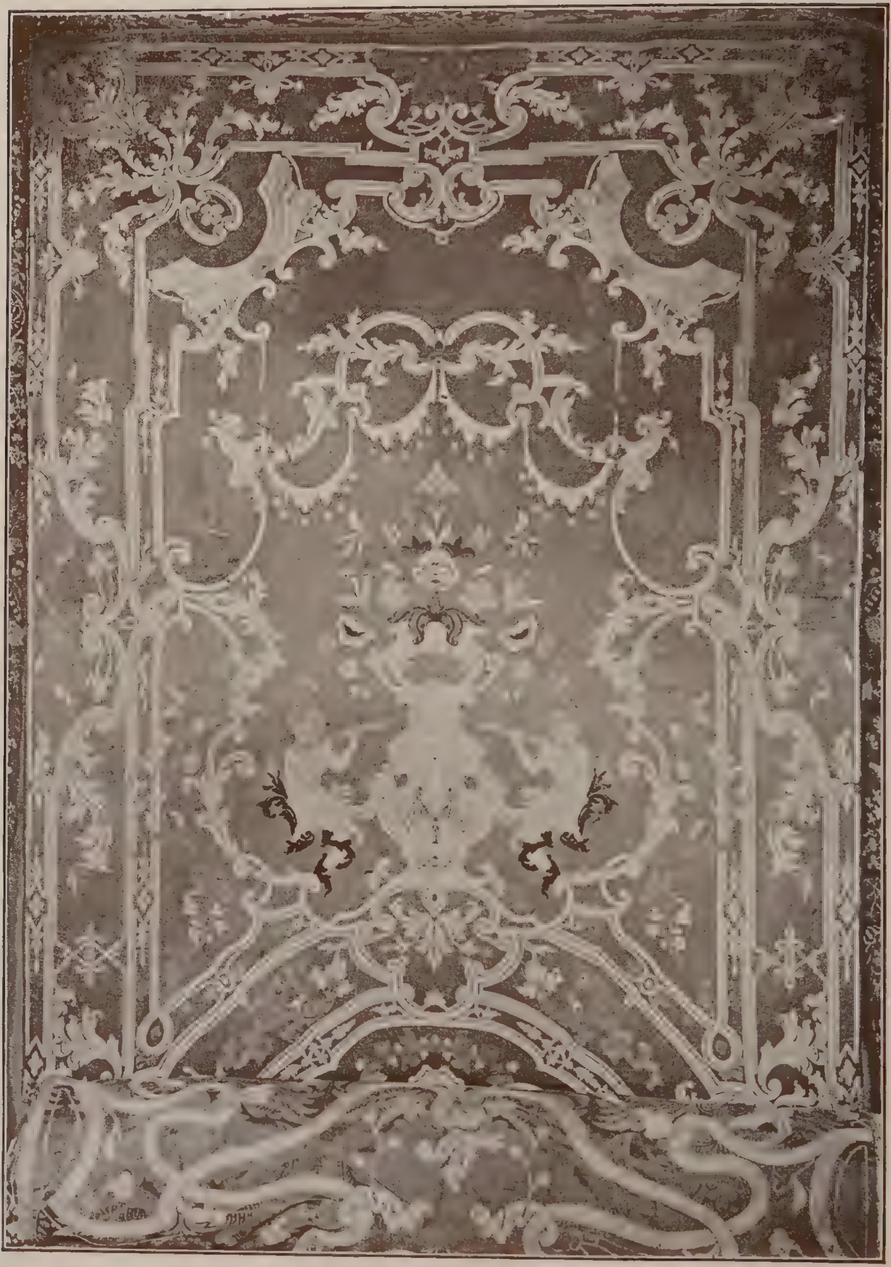
There were those present who had long envied Foucquet, with his ever-increasing power and wealth, his ability to patronise the arts, to collect, and even to establish his tapestry looms like a king, for his own palace and for gifts. This grand fête in the lovely month of June did more than shower pleasure, more than gratify the lust of the eye. In effect, it was a gathering of exquisite beauties and charming men, lost in light-hearted play; in reality, it proved to be an incitive to envy and malice, and a means to ruin.

Among the observant guests at this wondrous fête champêtre was Colbert, young, ambitious, keen. He was not slow to see the holes in Foucquet's fabric, nor were others. And so, whispers came to the king. Foucquet's downfall is the old story of envy, man trying to climb by ruining his superiors, hating those whose magnificence approaches their own. Foucquet's unequalled entertainment of the king was made to count as naught. Louis, even before leaving for Paris, had begun to ask whence came the money that purchased this wide fertile estate stretching to the vision's limit, the money that built the château of regal splendour, the money that paid for the prodigal pleasures of that day of delights? Foucquet thought to have gained the confidence and admiration of the king. But, on leaving, Louis said coldly, "We shall scarce dare ask you to our poor palace, seeing the superior luxury to which you are accustomed." A fearful cut, but only a straw to the fate



CHILDREN GARDENING

After Charles Lebrun. Gobelins, Seventeenth Century. Chateau Henri Quatre, Pau



GOBELINS GROTESQUE
Musée des Arts Decoratifs, Paris

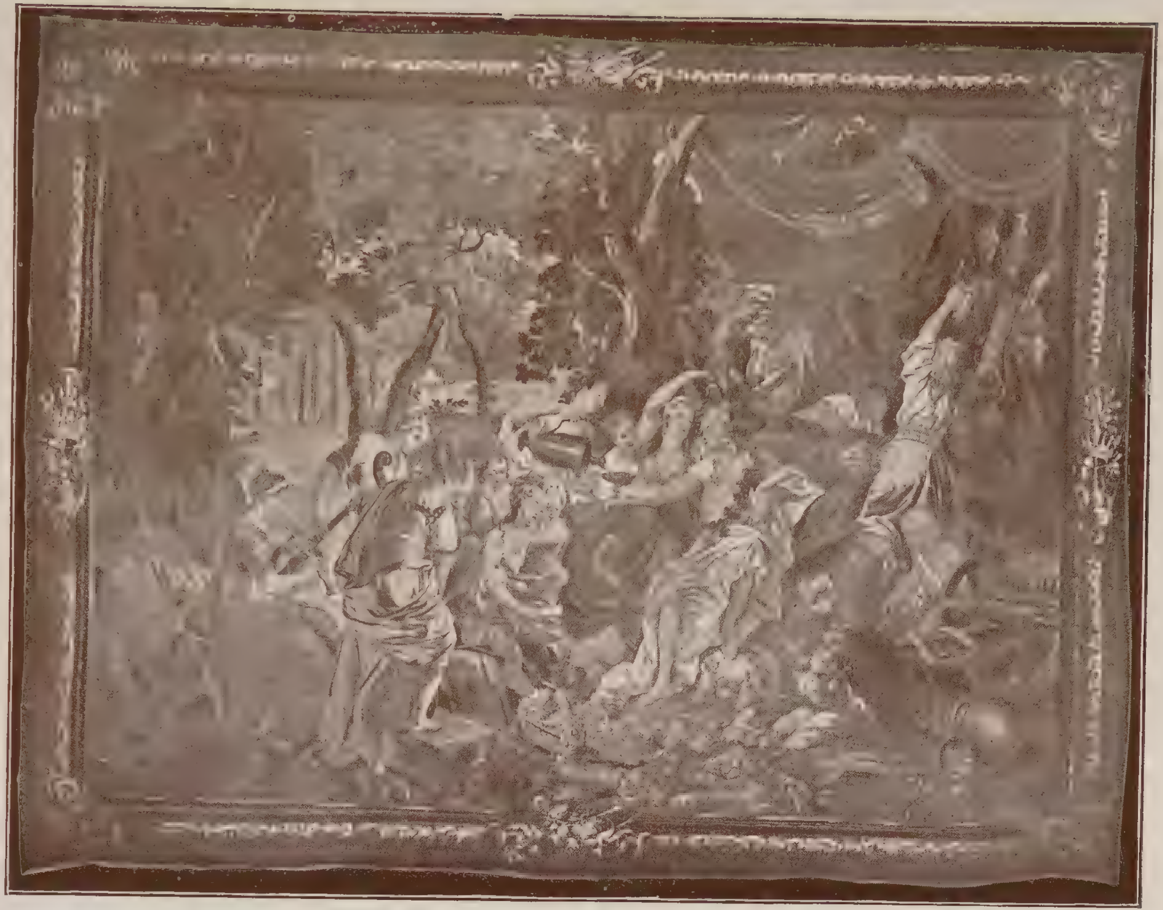
which followed, the investigations into the affairs of Superintendent Foucquet. His arrest and his conviction followed and then the eighteen dreary years of imprisonment terminating only with the superintendent's life. Madame de Sevigné saw him in the beginning, wept for her hero, but after a while she, too, fell away from his weary years.

With his arrest came the end of the glories of the Château of Vaux near Maincy, and so, too, came an end to the factory where so fine results had been obtained in tapestry weaving. Yet the effort was not in vain, for some of the tapestries remain and the factory was the school where certain celebrated men were trained.

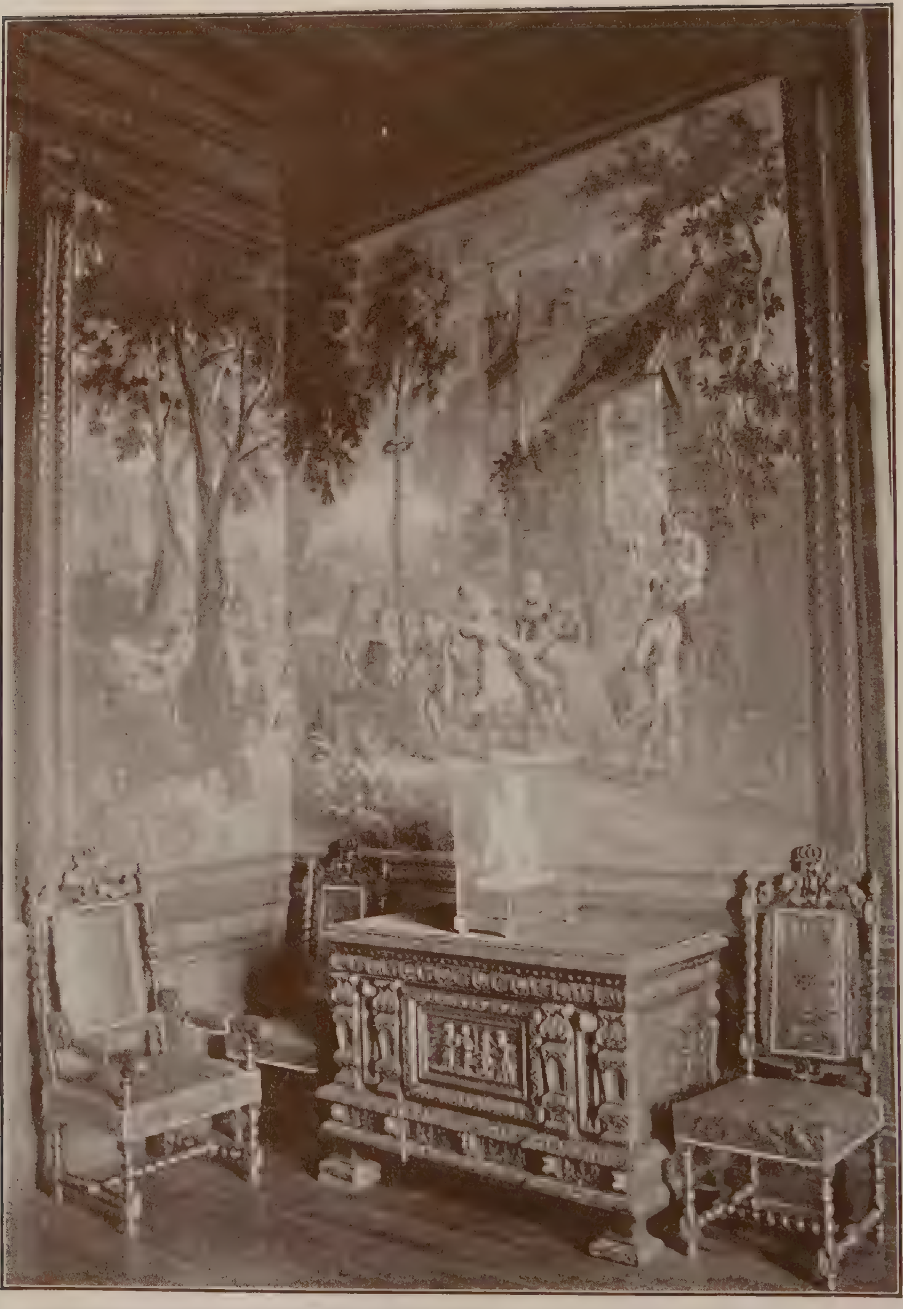
It may easily have been that Louis XIV discovered on that day at Vaux the excellence of Lebrun whom he made director at the Gobelins in Paris when they were but newly formed. Foucquet, wasting in prison, had many hours in which to think on this and on the advancement of the very man who had been keenest in running him to cover, the great Colbert. It was well for France, it was well for the artistic industry whose history occupies our attention, that these things happened; but we, nevertheless, feel a weakness towards the man of genius and energy caged and fretted by prison bars, for he had shown initiative and daring, qualities of which the world has ever need.

Foucquet's factory lasted three years. It was directed by Louis Blamard or Blammaert of Oudenarde, and employed a weaver named Jean Zègre, who came from the works at Enghien, works sufficiently known to be remarked. Lebrun composed here and fell under the influence of Rubens, an influence that pervaded the grandiose art of the day. The earliest works of Lebrun, three pieces, were later used to complete a set of Rubens' *History of Constantine*. *The Muses* was a set by Lebrun, also composed for the Château of Vaux. The charm of this set is a matter for admiration even now when, alas, all is destroyed but a few fragments.

The disgrace of Foucquet was the last determining cause of the establishment of the Gobelins factory under Louis XIV, an act which after this brief review of Paris factories (and an allusion to sporadic cases outside of Paris) we are in position at last to consider. Pursuit of knowledge in regard to the Gobelins factory leads us through ways the most flowery and ways the most stormy, through sunshine and through the dark, right up to our own times.



GOBELINS TAPESTRY, AFTER LEBRUN, EPOCH LOUIS XIV
Collection of Wm. Baumgarten, Esq., New York



THE VILLAGE FÊTE
Gobelins Tapestry after Teniers

CHAPTER X

THE GOBELINS FACTORY, 1662

COLBERT saw the wisdom of taking direction for the king, Louis XIV, of the looms of Foucquet's château. Travel being difficult enough to make desirable the concentration of points of interest, Colbert transferred the looms of Vaux to Paris. To do this he had first to find a habitat, and what so suitable as the Hotel des Gobelins, a collection of buildings on the edge of Paris by which ran a little brook called the Bièvre. The Sieur Leleu was then the owner, and the sale of the buildings was made on June 6, 1662.

This was the beginning only of the purchase, for Louis XIV added adjoining houses for the various uses of the large industries he had in mind, for the development of arts and crafts of all sorts, and for the lodging of the workers.

The story of the original occupants of the premises is almost too well known to recount. The simple tale of the conscientious "dyers in scarlet" is told on the marble placque at the present entry into the collection of buildings still standing, still open to visitors. It is a tale with a moral, an obvious simple moral with no need of Alice's Duchess to point it out, and it smacks strong of the honesty of a labour to which we owe so much.

Late in the Fifteenth Century the brothers Gobelin came to the city of Paris to follow their trade, which was dyeing, and their ambition, which was to produce a scarlet dye like that they had seen flaunting in the glowing city of Venice. The trick of the trade in those days was to find a water of such quality that dyes took to it kindly. The tiny river, or rather brook, called the Bièvre, which ran softly down towards the Seine had the required qualities, and by its murmuring descent, Jean and Philibert pitched the tents of their fortune.

They succeeded, too, so well that we hear of their descendants in later centuries as having become gentlemen, not of property only, but of cultivation, and far removed from trades or bartering. Their name is ever famous, for it tells not only the story of the two original dyers, but of their subsequent efforts in weaving, and finally it has come to mean the finest modern product of the hand loom. Just as Arras gave the name to tapestry in the Fourteenth Century, so the Gobelins has given it to the time of Louis XIV, even down to our own day—more especially in Europe, where the word tapestry is far less used than here.

The tablet now at the Gobelins—let us re-read it, for in some hasty visit to the Latin Quarter we may have overlooked it. Translated freely it reads, "Jean and Philibert Gobelin, merchant dyers in scarlet, who have left their name to this quarter of Paris and to the manufacture of tapestries, had here their atelier, on the banks of the Bièvre, at the end of the Fifteenth Century."

Another inscription takes a great leap in time, skips over the centuries when France was not in the lead in this art, and recommences with the awakening strength under the wise care of Henri IV. It reads:

"April 1601. Marc Comans and François de la Planche, Flemish tapestry weavers, installed their ateliers on the banks of the Bièvre."

"September 1667, Colbert established in the buildings of the Gobelins the manufacture of the furniture (*meubles*) of the Crown, under the direction of Charles Lebrun."

The tablet omits the date that is fixed in our mind as that of the beginning of the modern tapestry industry in France, the year 1662, but that is only because it deals with a date of more general importance, the time when the Gobelins was made a manufactory of all sorts of gracious products for the luxury of palaces and châteaux, not tapestries alone, but superb furniture, and metal work, inlay, mounting of porcelains and all that goes to furnish the home of fortunate men.

In that year of 1667 was instituted the ateliers supported by the state, not dependent upon the commercialism of the workers. This made possible the development of such men as Boulle with his superb furniture, of Riesner with his marquetry, of Caffieri with his marvels in metal to decorate all *meubles,* even vases, which were then coming from China in their beauty of solid glaze or eccentric ornament.

Here lies the great secret of the success of Louis XIV in these matters, with the coffers of the Crown he rewarded the artists above the necessity of mere living, and freed each one for the best expression of his own especial art. The day of individual financial venture was gone. The tapestry masters of other times had both to work and to worry. They had to be artists and at the same time commercial men, a chimerical combination.

The expense of maintaining a tapestry factory was an incalculable burden. A man could not set up a loom, a single one, as an artist sets up an easel, and in solitude produce his woven work of art. Other matters go to the making of a tapestry than weaving, matters which have to do with cartoons for the design, dyes, wools, threads, etc.; so that many hands must be employed, and these must all be paid. The apprentice system helped much, but even so, the master of the atelier was responsible for his finances and must look for a market for his goods.

What a relief it was when the king took all this responsibility from the shoulders and said to the artists and artisans, "Art for Art's sake," or whatever was the equivalent shibboleth of that day. Here was comfort assured for the worker, with a housing in the Gobelins, or in that big asylum, the Louvre, where an apartment was the reward of virtue. And now was a market assured for a man's work, a royal market, with the king as its chief, and his favourites following close.

The ateliers scattered about Paris were allied in spirit, were all the result of the encouragement of preceding monarchs, but it remained for Le Grand Monarque to gather all together and form a state solidarity.

Kings must have credit, even though others do the work. It was the labour of the able Colbert to organise this factory. He was in favour then. It was after his acuteness had helped in deposing the splendid brigand Foucquet, and his power was serving France well, so well that he brought about his head the inevitable jealousy which finally threw him, too, into unmerited disgrace.

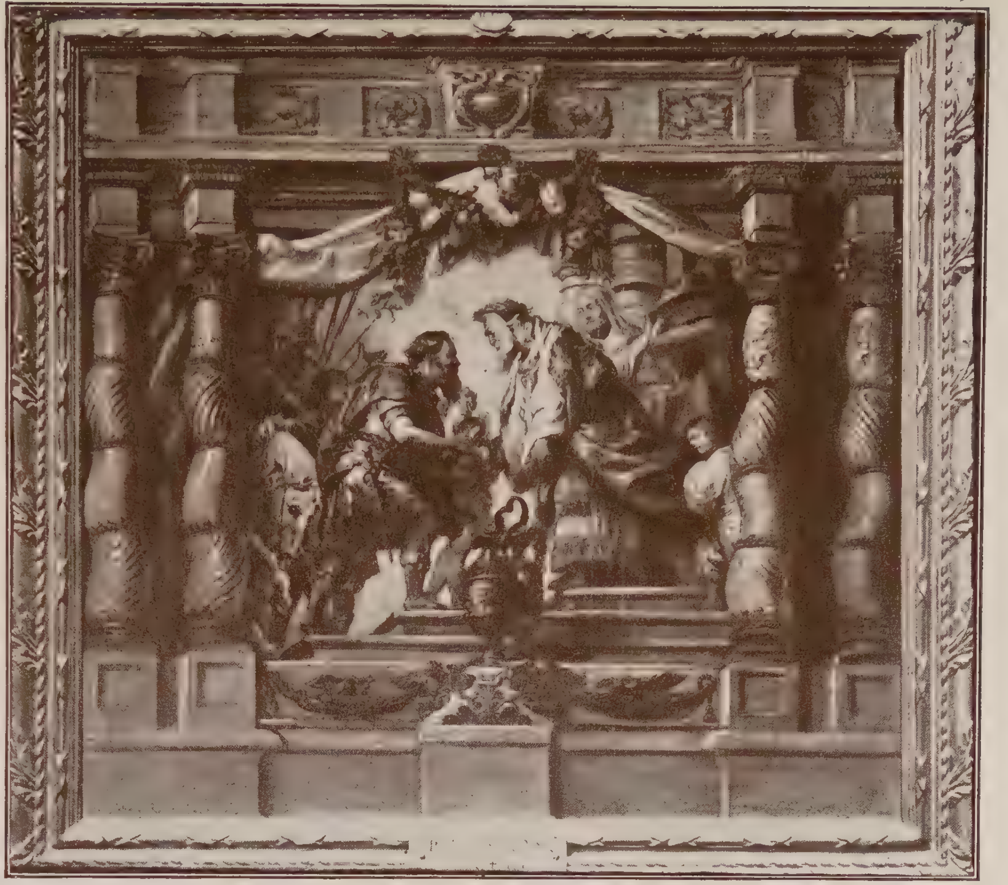
Colbert, then, although a Minister of State, head of the Army of France, and a few other things, had the fate of the Gobelins in his hand. As the ablest is he who chooses best his aids, Colbert looked among his countrymen for the proper director of the newly-organised institution. He selected Charles Lebrun.

The very name seems enough, in itself. It is the concrete expression of ability, not only as an artist, but as a leader of artists, a director, an assembler, a blender. He called to the Gobelins, as addition to those already there, the apprentices from La Trinité, the weavers from the Faubourg St. Germain, and from the Louvre. He established three ateliers of high-warp under Jean Jans, Jean Lefebvre and Henri Laurent; also two ateliers of low-warp under Jean Delacroix and Jean-Baptiste Mozin. When charged with the decoration of Versailles he had under his direction fifty artists of differing scopes, which alone would show his power of assembling and leading, of blending and ordering. Workers at the Gobelins numbered as many as two hundred fifty, and apprentices were legion.

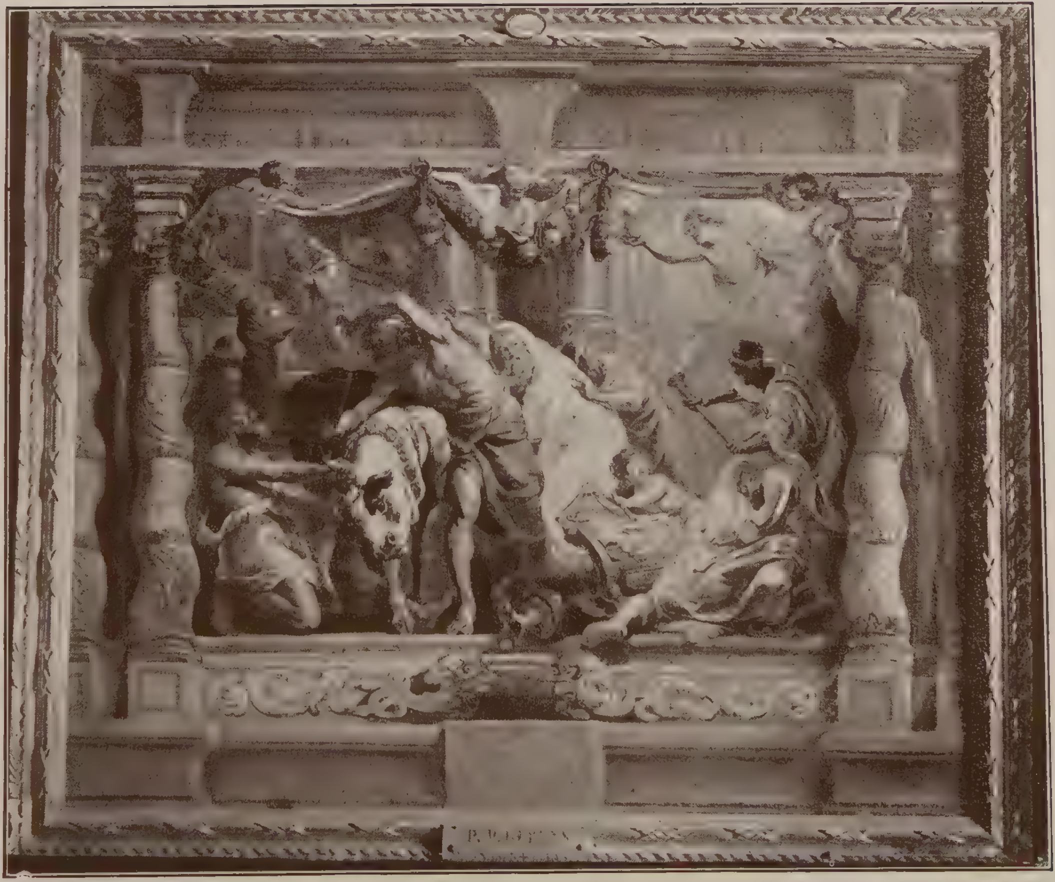
Ten or twelve important artists composed the designs for tapestries, yet the mind of Lebrun is seen to dominate all; his genius was their inspiration. It was he whose influence pervaded the decorative art of the day. More than any others in that grand age he influenced the tone of the artistic work. We may say it was the king, we may have styles named for the king, but it was Lebrun who made them what they were. The spirit of the time was there, monarch and man made that, but it was Lebrun who had the talent to express it in art. It was a time when France was fully awake, more fully awake than Italy who had, in fact, commenced the somnolence of her art; she was strong with that brutal force that is recently up from savagery, and she took her grandeur seriously.

At least that was the attitude of the king. No lightness, no effervescing cynical humour ever disturbed the heavy splendour of his pose. And this grand pose of the king, Lebrun expressed in the heavy sumptuousness of decoration. The tapestries of that time show the mood of the day in subject, in border and in colour. All is superb, grandiose.

Rubens, although not of France, dominated Europe with his magnificence of style, a style suited to the time, expressing force rather than refinement, yet with a splendid decorative value in the art we are considering. Flanders looked to him for inspiration, and his lead was everywhere followed. His virile work had power to inspire, to transmit enthusiasm to others, and thus he was responsible for much of the improvement in decorative art, the re-establishment of that art upon an intellectual basis. Designs from his hands were full, splendid and self-assertive; harmony and proportion were there. A study of the *Antony and Cleopatra* series and of the plates given in this volume will establish and verify this.



DESIGN BY RUBENS



DESIGN BY RUBENS

Lebrun's century was the same as that of Rubens, but the former had the fine feeling for art of the Latin, who knows that its first province is to please. A comparison between the two men must not be carried too far, for Rubens was essentially a painter, attacking the field of decoration only with the overflow of imagination, while Lebrun's life and talent were wholly directed in the way of beautifying palaces and châteaux. Yet Rubens' work gave a fresh impulse to tapestry weaving in Brussels while Lebrun was inspiring it in France.

Lebrun had, then, to direct the talent and the labour of an army of artists and artisans, and to keep them working in harmony. It was no mean task, for one artist alone was not left to compose an entire picture, but each was taken for his specialty. One artist drew the figures, another the animals, another the trees, and another the architecture; but it was the director, Lebrun, who composed and harmonised the whole. Thus, although the number of tapestries actually composed by him is few, it was his great mind that ordered the work of others. He was the leader of the orchestra, the others were the instruments he controlled.

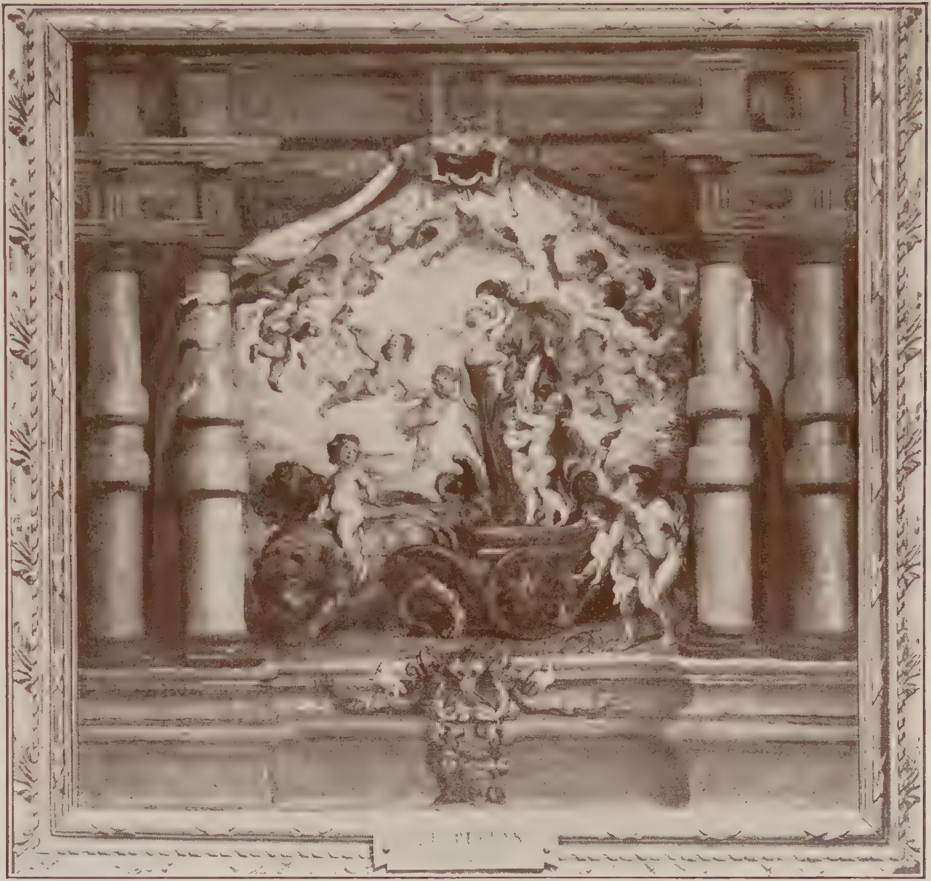
It was while at Vaux that Lebrun had more time for his own composition. He there produced a series called *Les Renommés,* masterpieces of pure decorative composition. These were designed as portières for the Château of Maincy. They came to be models for the Gobelins, and were woven to hang at royal doors, the doors of Foucquet being at this time dressed with iron bars.

The Gobelins wove seventy-two sets after this beautiful model which had made Lebrun's début as an artist. Foucquet had given him a more pretentious work; it was to complete a suite, the *History of Constantine,* after Raphael. Rubens had given a fresh flush of popularity to this subject, which again became the mode. The *History of Meleager* was begun at Vaux and finished at the Gobelins. Later, Vaux forgotten, or at least a thing of the past, Lebrun's decorative genius found expression in the series called *The Months* or *The Royal Residences,* of which there were twelve hangings.

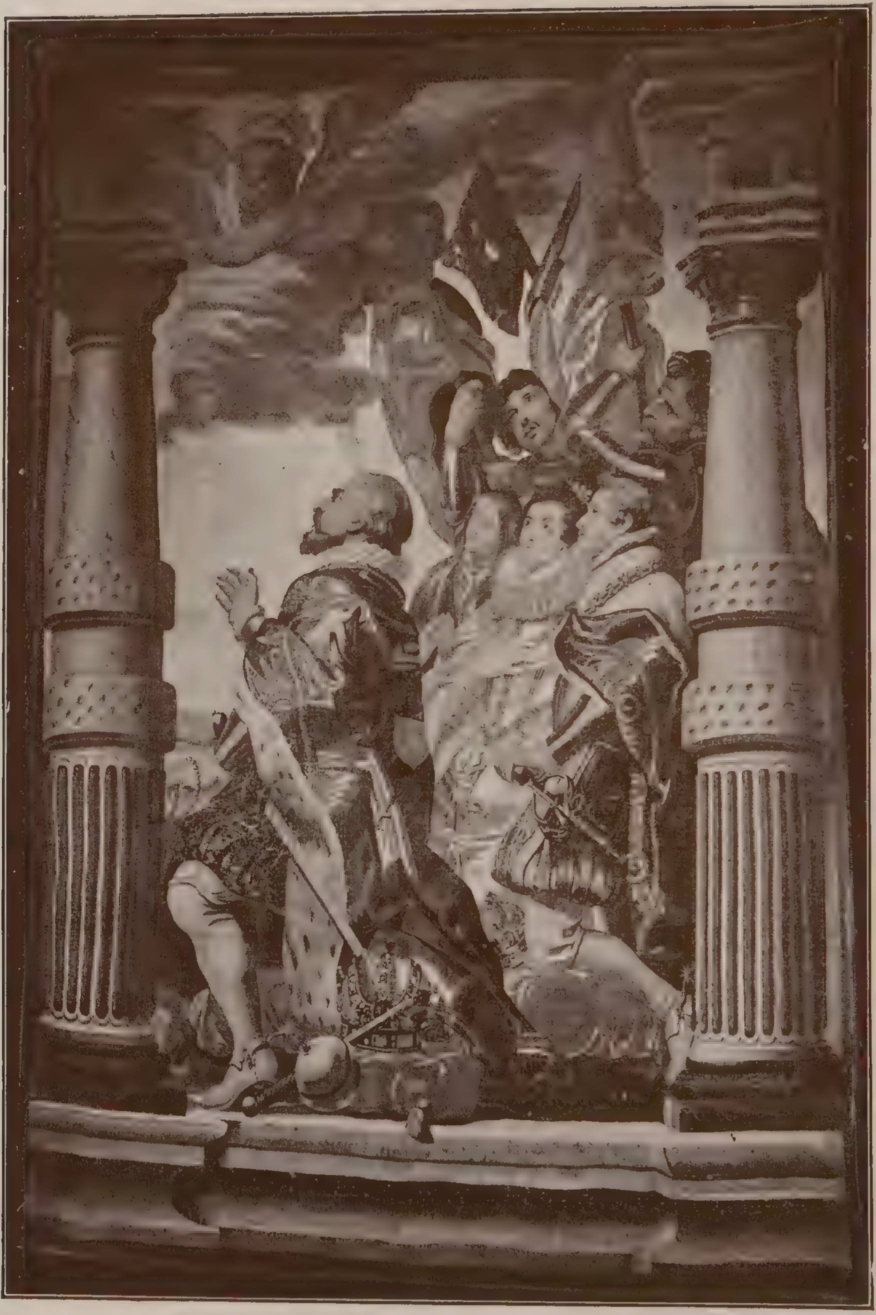
In these last the scheme is the perfection of decoration, with the subject well subdued, yet so subtly placed that notwithstanding its modesty, the eye promptly seeks it. The castle in the distance, the motive holding aloft the sign of the Zodiac, are seen even before the splendid columns and the foliage of the middle-ground.

Such a hanging has power to play pretty tricks with the imagination of him who gazes upon it. The columns, smooth and solid, declare him at once to be in a place of luxury. Beyond the foreground's columns, but near enough for touching, are trees to make a pleasant shade, and beyond, in the far distance, is the château set in fair gardens, even the château where the lovely Louise de la Vallière held her court until conscience drove her to the convent.

The set of most renown, woven under Lebrun's generalship, was that splendid advertisement of the king's magnificence known as the *History of the King.* Louis demanded above all else that he should appear splendidly before men. He was jealous of the magnificence of all



DESIGN BY RUBENS



GOBELINS TAPESTRY. DESIGN BY RUBENS
Royal Collection, Madrid

kings and emperors, whether living or dead. Even Solomon's glory was not to typify greater than his. With this end in view, pomp was his pleasure, ceremony was his gratification. Add to these an insatiable vanity that knows not the disintegrating assaults of a sense of humour, and we have a man to be fed on profound adulation.

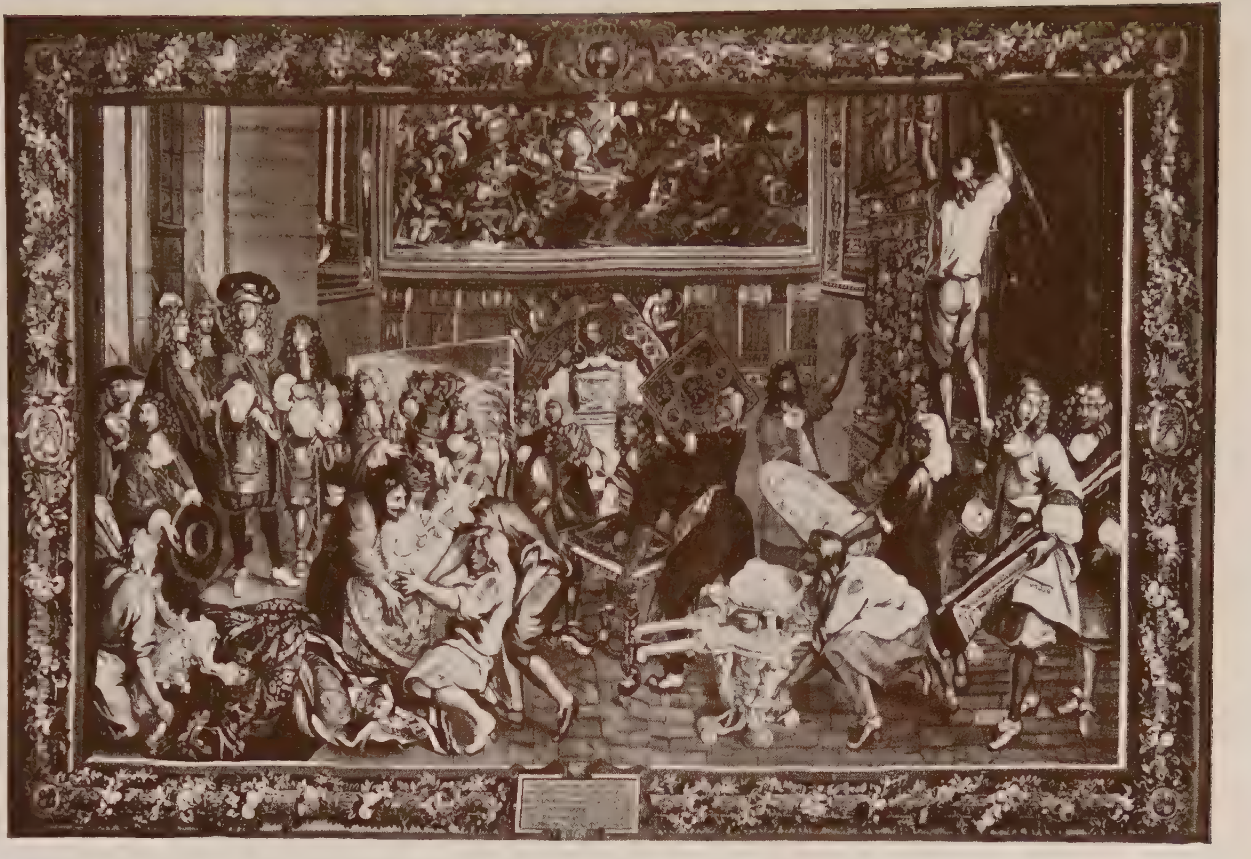
The subjects for the *History of the King* were chosen from official solemnities during the first twelve years of his reign. Lebrun's task, into which he threw his whole soul, was to celebrate the power and the glory of his master, to show the king in perpetual picture as the greatest living personage, and to still his fears with regard to long defunct royal rivals. His life as a man was pictured, his marriage, his treaties with other nations, and his actions as a soldier in the various battles or military conquests. In the latter affairs he had not even been present, but poet's license was given where the glorification of the king was concerned. The flattery that surrounds a king thus gave him reason to think that his persecutions in the Palatinate and his constant warfare were greatly to his glory.

It is the tapestry in this set that is called *Visit of Louis XIV to the Gobelins* that interests us strongly, as being delightfully pertinent to our subject. The picture shows the king in chary indulgence standing just within the court of the Royal Factory, while eager masters of arts and crafts strenuously heap before him their masterpieces. (Plate facing page 114.)

The borders of these sumptuous hangings are to be enjoyed when the original set can be seen, for the borders are Lebrun's special care. The three pieces added late in the reign are drawn with different borders, and no stronger example of deteriorating change can be given, the change in the composition of the border which took place after the passing of Lebrun. The pieces in the set of the *Life of the King* numbered forty; with the addition of the later ones, forty-three. They were repeated many times in the succeeding years, but on low-warp, reduced in size, and without the superb decorative border which was composed by Lebrun's own hand for the original series.

François de la Meulen was Lebrun's able coadjutor in the direction of this famous set. Eight artists accustomed to the work were charged with the cartoons, but Lebrun headed it all. It is interesting to note that the temptation to sport in the fields of pure decoration, led him into the personal composition of the border. These borders are the very acme of perfection in decoration, full of strength, of grace, and of purity. They suggest the classic, yet are full of the warm blood of the hour; they are Greek, yet they are French, and they foreshadow the centuries of beautiful design which France supplies to the world.

The colouring of these tapestries seems to us strong, but it is not a strength of tone that offends, rather it adds force to the subject. The charge is made that in this suite the deplorable change had taken place which lifted tapestries from their original intent and made of them paintings in wool. That change certainly did come later, as we shall see and deplore, but at present the colours



LOUIS XIV VISITING THE GOBELINS FACTORY
Gobelins Tapestry, Epoch Louis XIV

kept comparatively low in number. The proof of this was that only seventy-nine tones were discoverable when the Gobelins factory in recent years examined this hanging for the purposes of reproducing it.

Lebrun's task in this series seems to us far more simple in point of picturesqueness than it did to him, for the affairs of the time were those depicted. They were the events of the moment, and the personages taking part in them were given in recognisable portraiture. Figure a tapestry of to-day depicting the laying of a cornerstone by our National President, every one in modern dress, every face a portrait, and Lebrun's task appears in a new light. Yet he was able to accomplish it in a way which gratified the overfed vanity of Louis and which more than gratifies the art lover of to-day.

The set called the *History of Alexander* is one of Lebrun's famous works. In subject it departs from the affairs of the time of the Sun King, to portray the Greek Conqueror, to whom Louis liked to be compared. For us the classic dress is less piquant than the gorgeous toilettes of France in the Seventeenth Century, and the battle of the Granicus is less engaging than scenes from the life of Louis XIV. But this is a famous set, and paintings of the same may be found in the Louvre.

Originally the tapestries were but five, but the larger ones having been divided into three each, the number is increased. The Gobelins factory wove several sets, and, the model becoming popular, it was copied many times in Brussels and elsewhere, often with distressing alterations in drawing, in border, and in colour.

There were other suites produced at the Gobelins at this wonderful time of co-operation between Colbert, the minister, and Lebrun, the artist. Colbert, in his wisdom of state economy, had repaired the ravages of the previous ministry, and had the coffers full for the government's necessities and the king's indulgences. Well for the liberal arts, that he counted these among the matters to be fostered in this wonderful time, which rises like a mountain ridge between feudal savagery and modern civilisation.

But Colbert, powerful as was his position, had yet to suffer by reason of the despotism of the absolute monarch who ruled every one within borders of bleeding France. Louis began, before youth had left him, the terrible persecution of the people in the name of religion, and established also an indulgent left-hand court. The prodigious expenditures for these were bound to be liquidated by Colbert. Faithful to his master, he produced the money.

The charm of royalty surrounded Louis, he was idealised by a people proud of his position as the most magnificent monarch of Europe; but Colbert was denounced as a tax collector and a persecutor, yet suffered in silence, if he might protect his king. Before he died, Louvois had undermined his credit even with the king, and his funeral at night, to avoid a mob, was a pathetic fact. France has now reinstated him, say modern men—but that is the irony of fate.

CHAPTER XI

THE GOBELINS FACTORY (*Continued*)

COLBERT died most inopportunely in 1684 and was succeeded by his enemy, and for that matter, the enemy of France, the man of jealousy and cruelty, Louvois. He had long hated Colbert for his success, counting as an affront to himself Colbert's marvellous establishment of a navy which he felt rivalled in importance the army, over which the direction was his own.

On finding Colbert's baton in his hand, it was but human to strike with it as much as to direct, and one of his blows fell upon the head of the Gobelins, Lebrun. Thus history is woven into tapestry. Lebrun was not at once deposed; first his magnificent wings were clipped, so that his flights into artistic originality were curtailed. This petty persecution had a benumbing effect. New models were not encouraged. Strangely enough, the scenes that glorified the king were no longer reproduced, nor those of antique kings like Alexander, whose greatness Louis was supposed to rival.

It is not possible to tell the story of tapestry without telling the story of the times, for the lesser acts are but the result of the greater. There are matters in the life of Louis XIV that are inseparable from our account. These are the associating of his life with that of the three women whom he exalted far higher than his queen, Marie Thérèse, the well-known, much-vaunted mesdames, de la Vallière, de Montespan and de Maintenon.

Even before the death of Colbert, Louvois, with his army, had encouraged the religious persecutions and wars of the king, and shortly after, the widow of the poet Scarron became the royal spouse. Relentless, indeed, were the persecutions then. It was in the same year of the marriage that Louis revoked the Edict of Nantes, through the hand of the weak Le Tellier, an action which gave Louvois ample excuse for depleting the state coffers. Making military expense an excuse, he turned his blighting hand toward the Gobelins and restricted the director, Lebrun, even to denying him the golden threads so necessary for the production of the sumptuous tapestries.

And so for a time the productions of the looms lacked their accustomed elegance. Under Madame de Maintenon, the spirit of a morose religion pervaded the court. All France was suffering under it, and in its name unbelievable horrors were perpetrated in every province. Paris was not too well informed of these to interfere with bourgeois life, but at court the hypocritical soul of Madame de Maintenon made self-righteousness a virtue.

An almost laughable result of this pious rectitude was a certain order given at the Gobelins. Madame de Maintenon had thrust her leading nose between the doors of the factory and had scented outraged modesty in the reproduction there of the tapestries woven from models of Raphael, Giulio Romano and the classicists, cartoons in great favour after the hampering of Lebrun's imagination. The naked gods from Olympus must be clothed, said this pious and modest lady.

This was very well for her rôle, as her influence over the king lay deep-rooted in her pose of heavy virtue; but at the Gobelins, the tapestry-makers must have laughed long and loud at the prudery which they were set to further by actually weaving pictured garments and setting them into the hangings where the lithe limbs of Apollo, and Venus' lovely curves, had been cut away. The hanging called *The Judgment of Paris* is one of those altered to suit the refinement of the times.

Louvois' dominance lasted as long as Lebrun, so the genius of the latter never reasserted itself in the factory. Two methods of supply for designs came in vogue, and mark the time. One was to turn to the old masters of Italy's high Renaissance for drawings. This brought a quantity of drawings of fables and myths into use, so that palace walls were decorated with Greek gods instead of modern ones. Raphael, as a master in decoration, was carefully copied, also other men of his school. The second source of cartoons was chosen by Louvois, who searched among previous works for the most celebrated tapestries and had them copied without change.

Thus came the Gobelins to reproduce hangings that had not originated in their ateliers. All this traces the change that came from the clipping of Lebrun's wings of genius. Identification marks they are, when old tapestries come our way.

Pierre Mignard succeeded Lebrun as director of the Gobelins after the death of the greatest genius of decoration in modern times. Lebrun had seen such prosperity of tapestry weaving that eight hundred workers had scarcely been enough to supply the tapestries ordered. When Mignard came for his five years of direction, things had mightily changed, and he did nothing to revive or encourage the work. He owed his appointment entirely to Louvois, whose protégé he had long been. The same year, 1691, saw the death of them both.

Until 1688 the factory was at its best time of productiveness, reaching the perfection of modern drawing in its cartoons, and, in its weaving, equalling the manner of Brussels in the early Sixteenth Century.

From then on began the decline, for the reasons so forcibly written on pages of history. The French king's ambition to conquer, his animosity—jealousy, if you will—toward Holland, his unceasing conflict with England, added to his fierce attacks on religionists, especially in the Palatinate—all these things required the most stupendous expenditures. The Mississippi was now discovered, the English colonists were in conflict with the French, here in America, and the New World was becoming too desirable a possession for Louis to be willing to cede his share without a struggle; and thus came the expense of fighting the English in that far land which was at least thirty days' sail away.

Perhaps Mignard worked against odds too great for even a strong director. Such drains on the state treasury as were made by the self-indulgent court, and by the political necessities, demanded not only depriving the Gobelins of proper expensive materials, but in the department of furniture and ornaments, demanded also the establishment of a sinister melting pot, a hungry mouth that devoured the precious metals already made more precious by the artistic hands of the gold-working artists.

Mignard's futile work was finished by his demise in 1695. Such was then the pitiable conditions at the Gobelins that it was not considered worth while to fill his place. Thus ended the first period of that beautiful conception, art sustained by the state, artists relieved from all care except that of expressing beauty.

The ateliers were closed; the weavers had to seek other means of gaining their living. The busy Gobelins, a very Paradise of workers, an establishment which felt itself the pride of Paris and the pet of the king, full of merry apprentices and able masters, this happy solidarity fell under neglect. The courtyards were lonely; the Bièvre rippled by unused; the buildings were silent and deserted. Some of the workers were happy enough to be taken in at Beauvais, some returned to Flanders, but many were at the miserable necessity of dropping their loved professions and of joining the royal troops, for which the relentless ambition of the king had such large and terrible use.

The time when the factory remained inactive were the dolorous years from 1694 to 1697. It was in the latter year that peace was signed in the Holland town of Ryswick, which ended at least one of Louis' bloody oppressions, the fierce attacks in the Palatinate.

The place of Colbert was never filled, so far as the Gobelins was concerned. Louvois had not its interests in his hard hands, nor had his immediate followers in state administrations up to 1708, which included Mansard (of the roofs) and the flippity courtesan, the Duc d'Antin. But power was later given to Jules Robert de Cotte to raise the fallen Gobelins by his own wise direction, assisted by his father's political co-operation (1699–1735). Once again can we smile in thinking of the factory where the wares of beauty were produced. Of course, the artists flocked to the centre, eager to express themselves. The one most interesting to us was Claude Audran. Others there were who contributed adorable designs and helped build up the most exquisite expressions of modern art, but, alas, their modesty was such that their names are scarce known in connexion with the art they vivified.

The aged Louis was ending his forceful reign in increasing weakness, deserted at the finish by all but the rigid de Maintenon; and four-year-old Louis, the grandson of the Grand Dauphin, was succeeding under the direction of the Regent of Orleans. New monarchs, new styles, the rule was; for the newly-crowned must have his waves of flattery curling about the foot of the throne. Louis XIV, the Grand Monarque, lived to his pose of heavy magnificence even in the furnishing and decorating of the apartments where he ruled as king and where he lived as man. Sumptuous splendour, expressed in heavy design, in deep colouring, with much red and gold, these were the order of the day, and best expressed the reign.

But with Philip as regent, and the young king but a baby, a gayer mood must creep into the articles of beauty with which man self-indulgently decorates his surroundings. Pomp of a heavy sort had no place in the regent's heart. He saw life lightly, and liked to foster the belief that a man might make of it a pretty play.

Thus, given so good excuse for a new school of decoration, Claude Audran snatched up his talented brush and put down his dainty inspirations with unfaltering delicacy of touch. He wrote upon his canvas poems in life, symphonies in colour, created a whole world of tasteful fancy, a world whose entire intent was to please. He left the heavy ways of pomp and revelled in a world where roses bloom and ribbons flutter, where clouds are strong to support the svelt deity upon them, and where the rudest architecture is but an airy trellis.

The classic, the Greek, he never forgot. It was ever his inspiration, his alphabet with which he wrote the spirit of his composition, but it was a classic thought played upon with the most talented of variations. Pure Greek was too cold and chaste for the temper of the time in which he lived and worked and of which he was the creature; and so his classic foundation was graced with curves, with colour, with artful abandon, and all the charming fripperies of one of the most exquisite periods of decoration. Gods and goddesses were a necessary part of such compositions, and a continual playing among amorini, but such deities lived not upon Olympus, nor anywhere outside France of the Eighteenth Century. The heavy human forms made popular by the inflation of the Seventeenth Century were banished to some dark haven reserved for by-gone modes, and these new gods were exquisite as fairies while voluptuous as courtesans. They were all caught young and set, while still adolescent and slender, in suitable niches of delicate surroundings.

The talent of Audran, not content with figures alone, was lavishly expended on those ingenious decorative designs which formed the frame and setting of the figures, the airy world in which they lived and in the borders that confined the whole.

Only a study of tapestries or their photographs can show the radical depth of the change from the styles prevailing under the influence of Madam de Maintenon to those produced by Audran and his school under the regence. The difference in character of the two dominations is the very evident cause. It is as though the severe moral pose of de Maintenon had suppressed a whole Pandora's box of loves and graces who, when the lid was lifted by the Regent, flew, a happy crew, to fix themselves in dainty decorative effect, trailing with them their complement of accessory flowers, butterflies, clouds and tempered grotesques.

Philippe d'Orleans, under the influence of the corrupt cleverness of Cardinal du Bois, celebrated the few years of his regency by bankrupting France with John Law's financial fallacies (this was the time of the South Sea Bubble and the Mississippi scheme) and by returning to Spain her princess as unsuited for the boy king's mate—with war as the natural result of that insult.

But he also let artists have their way, and the style that they supplied him, shows a talented invention unsurpassed. Audran we will place at the top, but only to fix a name, for there was a whole army of men composing the tapestry designs that so delighted the people of those days and that have gone on thrilling their beholders for two hundred years, and which distinguish French designs from all others—which give them that indefinable quality of grace and softness that we denominate French. Wizards in design were the artists who developed it and those who continue it in our own times.

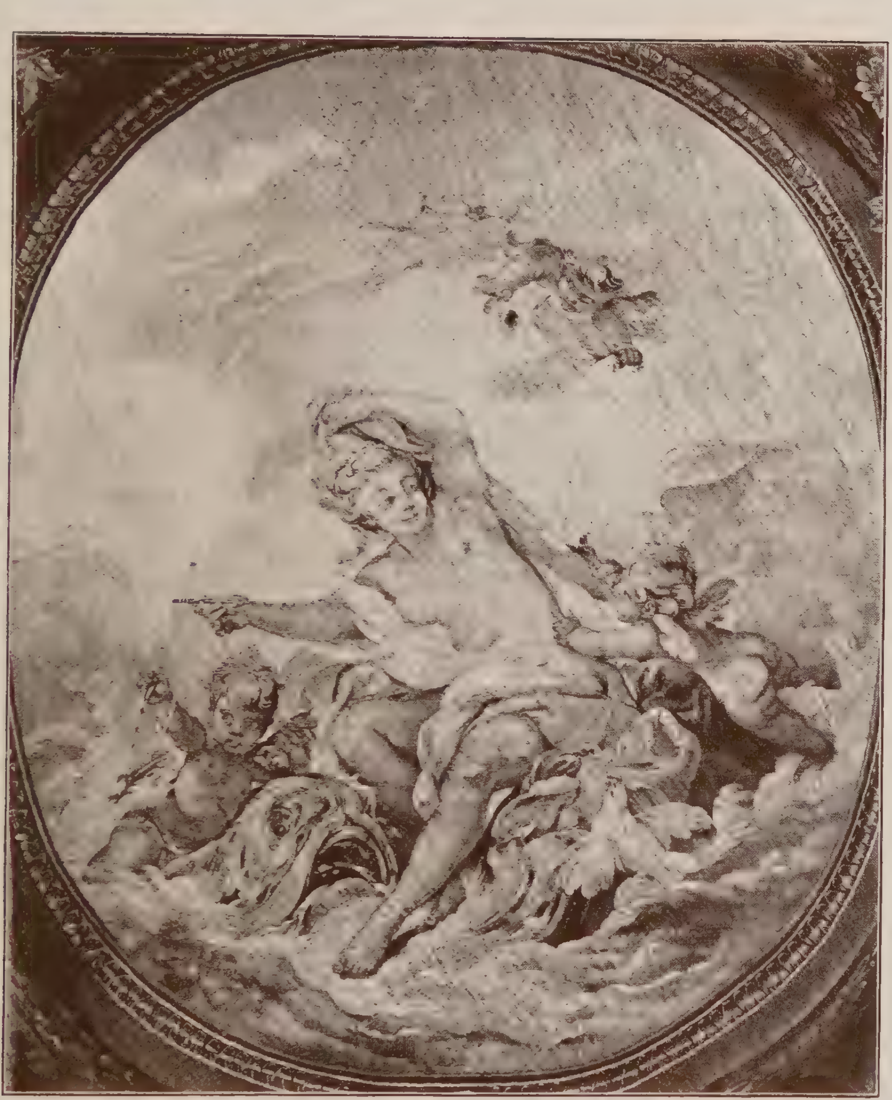
CHAPTER XII

THE GOBELINS FACTORY (*Continued*)

AUDRAN had in his studio André Watteau, whose very name spells sophisticated pastorals of exceeding loveliness. Watteau worked with Audran when he was producing his most inspired set of tapestry, on which we must dwell for a bit for pure pleasure. This set is called the *Portières des Dieux.*

That they were portières, only door-hangings, is a fact too important to be slipped by. It denotes one of the greatest changes in tapestries when the size of a hanging comes down from twenty or thirty feet to the dimensions of a doorway. It speaks a great change in interiors, and sets tapestries on a new plane. Later on, they are still further diminished. But the sadness of noting this change is routed by the thrills of pleasure given by the exquisite design, colour and weave.

The *Portières of the Gods* was, then, a series of eight small hangings, four typifying the seasons and four the elements, with an appropriate Olympian forming the central point of interest and the excuse for an entourage of thrilling and graceful versatility. This set has been copied so many times that even the most expert must fail in trying to identify the date of reproduction. Two hundred and thirty times this set is known to have been reproduced, and such talented weavers were given the task as Jans and Lefebvre.



GOBELINS TAPESTRY. TIME OF LOUIS XV

In this exquisite period, which might be called the adolescence of the style Louis XV, Audran and his collaborators produced another marvellous and inspired set of portières. These were executed for the Grand Dauphin, to decorate his room in the château at Meudon, and were called the *Grotesque Months in Bands.* The most self-sufficient of pens would falter at a description of design so exquisite, which is arranged in three panels with a deity in each, a composition of extraordinary grace above and below them, and a bordering band of losenge or diaper, on which is set the royal double L and the significant dolphin who gave his name to kings' sons. The exquisite art of Audran and of the regence cannot be better seen than in this set of tapestries which was woven but once at the royal factory, although repeated many times elsewhere with the border altered, Audran's being too personal for other chambers than that of the prince for whom it was composed. Recently copies have been made without border.

The name of the artist, Charles Coypel, must not be overlooked, for it was he who composed the celebrated suite of *Don Quixote.* Twenty-eight pieces composed the series, and they were drawn with that exquisite combination of romantic scenes and fields of pure decorative design that characterised the charm of the Regence. In the centre of each piece (small pieces compared to those of Louis XIV) was a scene like a painting representing an incident from the adventure of the humorously pathetic Spanish wanderer; and this was surrounded with so much of refined decoration as to make it appear but a medallion on the whole surface. This set was so important as to be repeated many times and occupied the factory of the Gobelins from 1718 to 1794. Charles Coypel was but twenty when he composed the first design for this suite. Each year thereafter he added a new design, not supplying the last one until 1751. But, while all honour is due Coypel, Audran and Le Maire and their collaborators must be remembered as having composed the borders, the pure decorative work which expresses the tender style of transition, the suggestive period of early spring that later matured into the fulsome Rococo. America is enriched by five of these exquisite pieces through Mr. Morgan's recent purchase.

But while artists were producing purity in art, those in political power were, with ever-increasing effect, plunging morals into the mud. Philippe, the Regent, died, the corrupt Duke of Bourbon took the place of minister, and poor Louis XV was still but thirteen years old, and unavoidably influenced by the lives of those around him. Even the Gobelins was under the hand of the shallow Duke d'Antin. Yet even when the king matured and became himself a power for corruption, the artists of the Gobelins reflected only beauty and light. It is to their credit.

It is an ungrateful task to pick flaws with a period so firmly enthroned in the affections as that of the regence and the early years of the reign of Louis XV. The beauties of its pure decoration lead us into Elysian fields that are but reluctantly left behind. But the designs and tapestry weavers of that time left us two distinct classes of production, and to be learned in such matters, the amateur contemplates both. This second style is ungrateful because it trains us away from art, delicate and ingenious, and plants us before enormous woven paintings.

Now it never had been the intention of tapestry to replace painting. Whenever it leaned that way a deterioration was evident. It was by the lure of this fallacy that Brussels lost her pre-eminence. It was through this that the number of tones was increased from the twenty or more of Arras to the twenty thousand of the Gobelins. It was through this that the true mission of tapestry was lost, which was the mission of supplying a soft, undulating lining to the habitat of man, and flashes of colour for his pageants.

Under Louis XIV the pictures came thick and fast, as we have seen, but in deep-toned, simple colour-scheme. Now, with the De Cottes as directors at the Gobelins, and with a new reign begun, more pictures were called for. The splendid *History of the King* of Louis XIV could not be forgotten; the history of his successor must be similarly represented, and what could this be but a series of woven paintings. The flower of the time was an exquisitely complicated decoration on a small scale. The larger expression was not spontaneous.

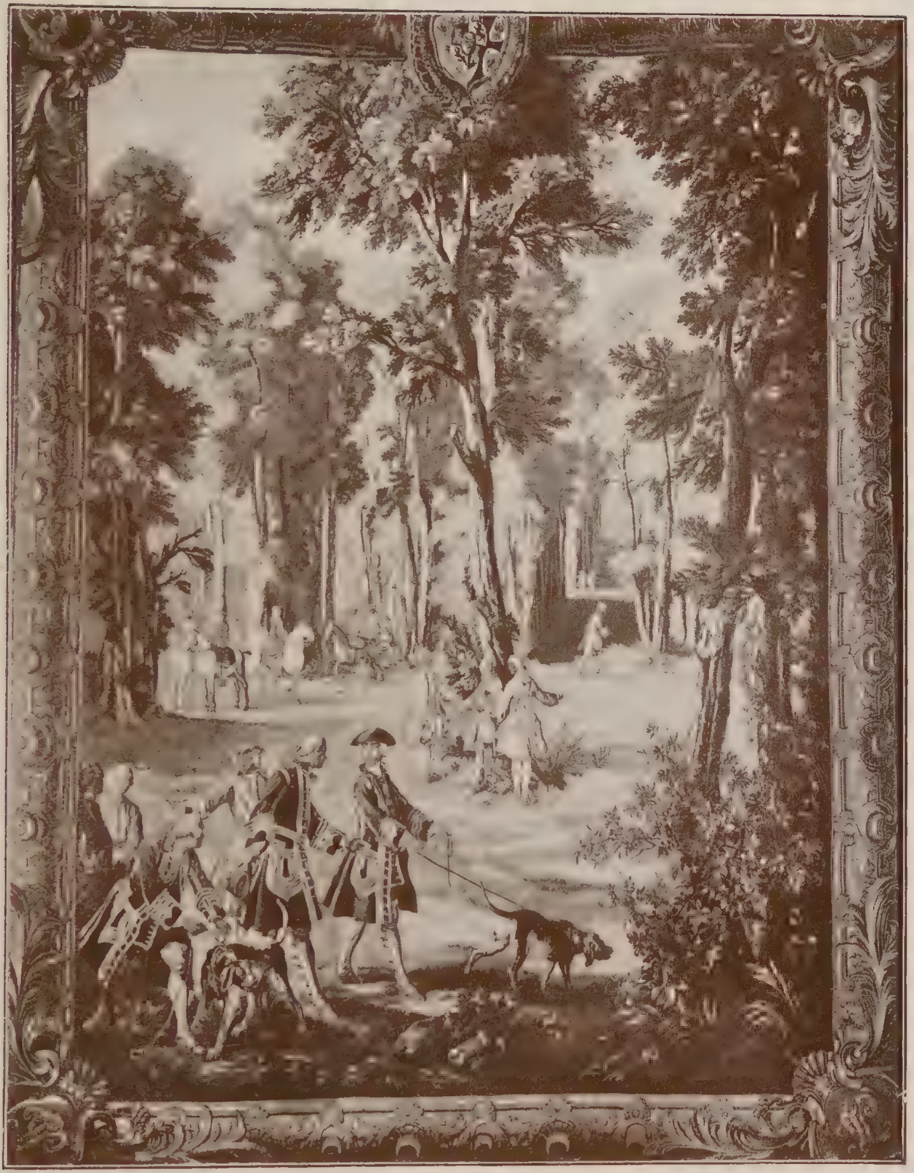
Louis XV, poor boy, was not old enough to have had many events outside the nursery, so it took imagination—perhaps that of the elegant profligate, Duke d'Antin—to suggest an occasion of appropriate splendour and significance. The official reception of the Turkish ambassador in 1721 was the subject chosen, and under the direction of Charles Parrocel became a superb work, full of court magnificence of the day and a valuable portrayal to us of the boyhood of the king.

The same type of big picture was continued in the series of *Hunts of Louis XV,* lovely forest scenes wherein much unsportsmanlike elegance displays itself in the persons of noble courtiers. The Duc d'Antin favoured these and they were reproduced until 1745.

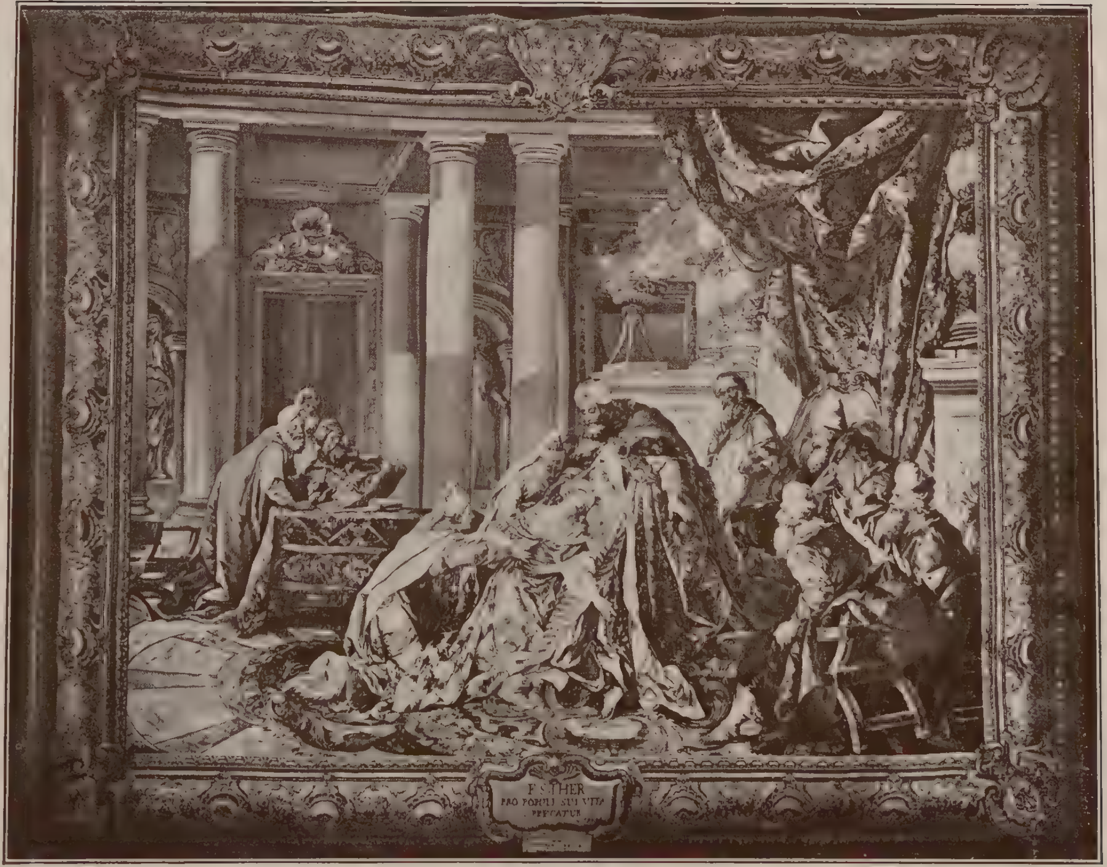
It is probable that the Bible fell into neglect in those days, too heavy a volume for pointed, perfumed fingers accustomed to no books at all. Bossuet, Voltaire, were they not obliged to set to the sonorous music of their voices the reforming and satirical attacks on manners and morals of the aristocrats at a time when books lay all unread? But at the Gobelins ateliers the Bible, wiped clean of dust, was much consulted for inspiration in cartoons. Charles Coypel dipped into the Old Testament, and Jouvenet into the New, with the result of several suites of tapestries of great elegance—all of which might much better have been painted on canvas and framed.

Charles Coypel, the talented member of a talented family of painters, also made popular the heroine *Armide,* who seemed almost to come of the Bible, since Tasso had set her in his Christian *Jerusalem Delivered.* The seductive palace and entrancing gardens where Renaud was kept a prisoner, gave opportunity for fine drawing in this set.

The Iliad of Homer came in for its share of consideration at the hands of Antoine and Charles Coypel, who made of it a set of five scenes. It was Romanelli, the



HUNTS OF LOUIS XV
Gobelins, G. Audran after Cartoon by Oudry



ESTHER AND AHASUERUS SERIES
Gobelins, about 1730. Cartoon by G. F. de Troy; G. Audran, weaver

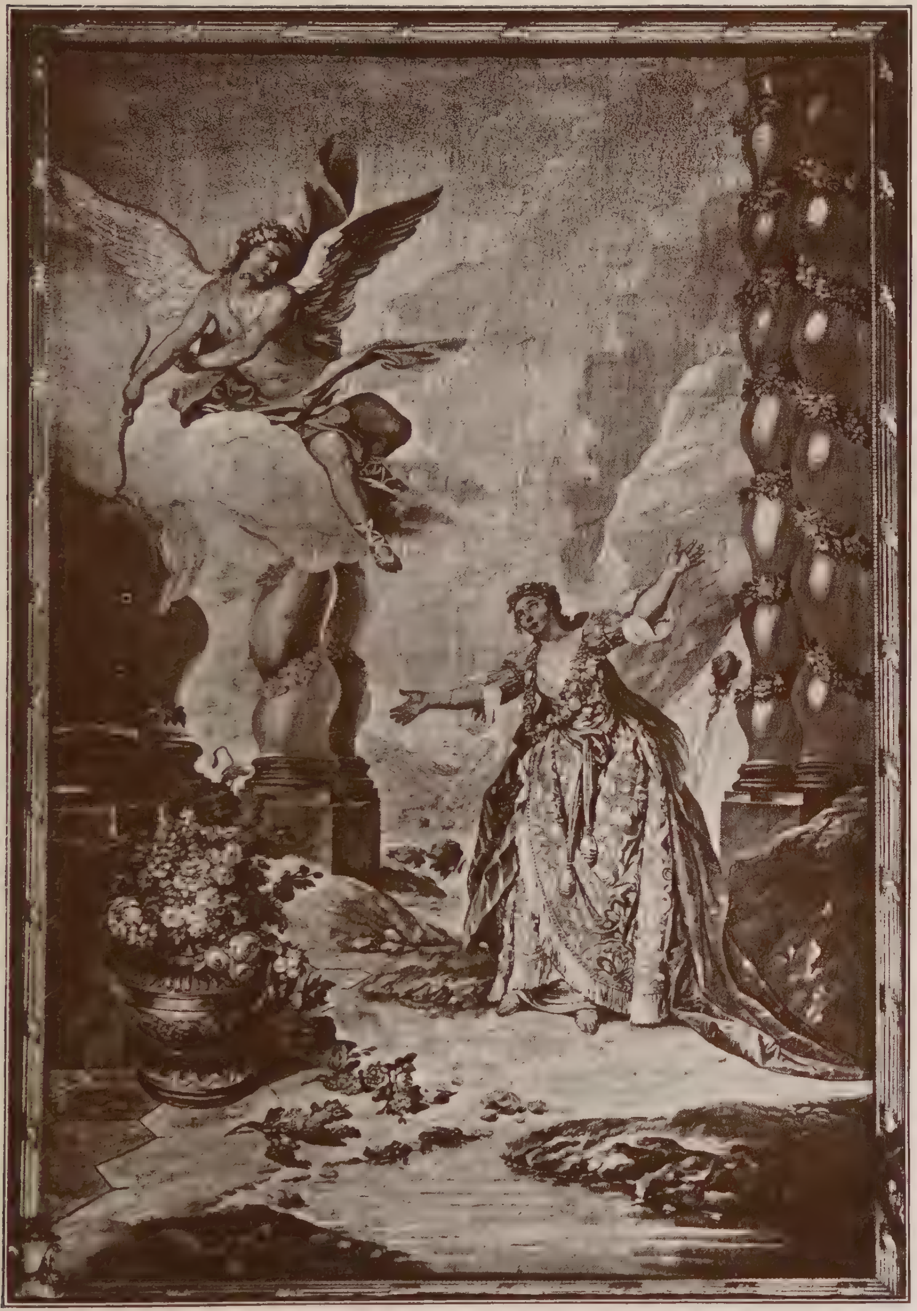
Italian, who painted a similar set, a hundred years before, for Cardinal Barberini, which set came to America in the Ffoulke collection. After the death, in 1730, of the Duke d'Antin, that interesting son of Madame de Montespan, several directors had the management of the Gobelins in hand, the Count of Vignory and the Count of Angivillier being the most important prior to the Revolution. These were men who held the purse-strings of the state, and could thereby foster or crush a state institution, but the direction of the Gobelins itself, as a factory, was in the hands of architects, beginning with the able De Cotte. As the factory had many ateliers, these were each directed by painters, among whom appear such interesting men of talent as Oudry, Boucher, Hallé.

Although d'Antin was dead when it commenced, he is accredited with having inspired and ordered the important hanging known as the *History of Esther.* (Plate facing page 131.) The first piece, from cartoons by Jean François de Troy, was sent to the weavers in 1737, and the last piece, which was painted in Rome, was finished in 1742. This set shows as ably as any can, the magnificent style of production of the period. It had from the beginning an immense popularity and was copied many times. Even now it is a favourite subject for those whose perverted taste leads them into the dubious art of copying tapestry in paints on cloth.

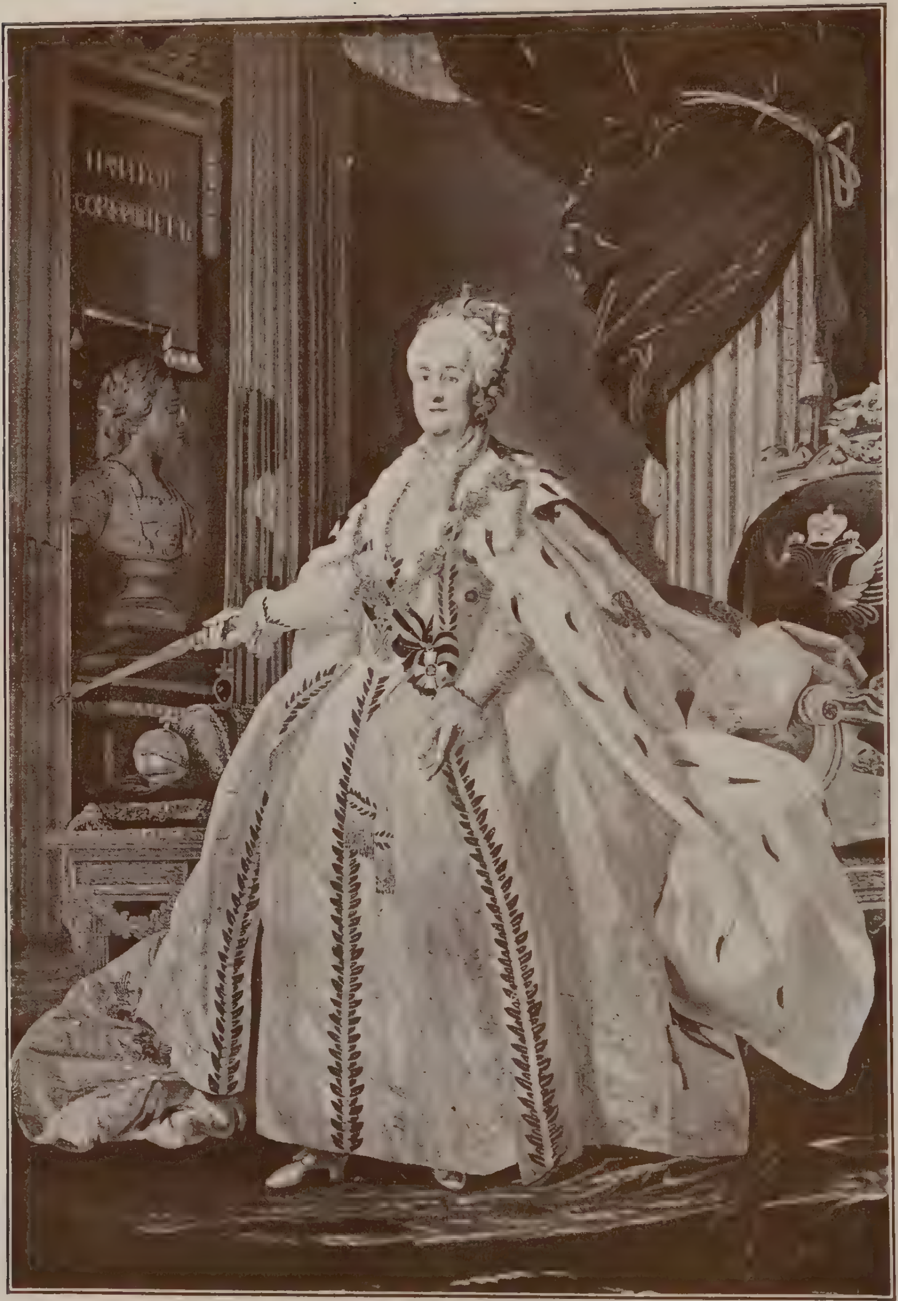
The serious accusation against this set, which in composition seems much like the tableaux in grand opera, is that it invades the art of painting. And that is the fault of woven art at that period. The decline in tapestry in Paris began when both weavers and painters struggled for the same results, the weavers quite forgetting the strength and beauty that were peculiar to their art alone.

This fault cannot be laid to the weavers only, who numbered such men as Neilson the able Scot, and Cozette, who, with wondrous touch, wove the set of *Don Quixote*; nor were the artists at fault, for they included such men as Audran and Boucher. No, it was the director who blighted and subverted talent, and the vitiated public taste that shifted restlessly and demanded novelty. The novelty that came in large hangings was a suppressing of the delicate subjects that delight the imagination by their playful grace, their association of human life with all that is gaily exquisite. The mode was for leaving the land of idealised mythology, for discarding the flowers, the scrolls, the happy loves and charming crew that lived among them, and for plunging into Roman history, real and ugly, enwrapped in drapings too full, cumbered with forced accessory, or into such mythology as is represented in *Cupid and Psyche*. (Plate facing page 132.)

The *History of Esther* illustrates the loss of imagination sustained by the border which had come to be a mere woven imitation, in shades of brown and yellow, of a carved and gilded, wooden frame. At the close of the reign of Louis XV, borders were frankly abandoned altogether. Compare this state of things with the days when Audran and Coypel were producing the sets of *The Sea-*



CUPID AND PSYCHE
Gobelins Tapestry. Eighteenth Century. Design by Coypel



PORTRAIT OF CATHERINE OF RUSSIA
Gobelins under Louis XVI.

sons, The Months, and *Don Quixote.* It is aridness compared to talented invention.

The top note of the imitation of painting was struck when the Gobelins set the task of becoming a portrait maker. (Plate facing page 133.) The work was done, it was bound to be, as royalty backed the demand. Portraits were woven of Louis XV (to be seen now at Versailles), and his queen, of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, and others less well known. A better scheme for limiting the talent of the weaver could not have been suggested by his most ingenious enemy. He was a man of talent or his art had not reached so high, and as such must be untrammelled; but here was given him a work where personal discretion was not allowed, where he must copy tone for tone, shade by shade, the myriad indefinite blendings of the brush.

It is this practice, pursued to its end, that has made of the tapestry weaver a mere part of a machine, and tapestry-making a lost art, to remain in obscurity until weavers return to the time before the French decadence.

The temper of those who hold in their hands the direction of the people, these are the determining causes of the products of that age. If d'Angivillier was responsible for displacing a transcendent art with a false one, if he routed a dainty mythology and its accessories with the heavy effort and paraphernalia of the Romans, on whom shall we place the entirely supportable responsibility of diminishing tapestries from noble draperies down to mere furniture coverings?

The result came happily, with much fluttering of fans, dropping of handkerchiefs, with powder, patches, intrigues, naughty sports, and a general necessity for a gay company to divide itself into groups of four or two—a lady and a cavalier, forsooth—the inevitable man and maid. In the time of the preceding king, Louis XIV, the court lived in masses. Life was a pageant, a grand one, moving in slow dignity of gorgeous crowds, but a pageant on which beat the fierce light of a throne jealous of its grandeur. No chance was here for sweet escape and no chance for light communing.

But all that saw a change. The needs of the lighter court and the lighter people, were for reminders that life is a merry dance in which partners change often, and sitting-out a figure with one of them is part of the game.

Perhaps the huge apartments were not to the taste of Regent Philippe, and certainly they were not convenient to the life of the king when he came to man's estate. So, down came the ceiling's height, and closer drew the walls, until the model of the Petit Trianon was reached and considered the ideal—if that were not indeed the miniature Swiss Cottage.

What place had an acre of tapestry in these little rooms? How could yards of undulating colour hang over walls that were already overlaid with the most exquisite low relief in wood that has ever been carved this side of the Renaissance in Italy? No place for it whatever. So, out with it—the fashions have changed.

But there was the furniture. That, too, was smaller than hitherto. But this was the day of artists skilled in small design, and they must fill the need.

CHAPTER XIII

THE GOBELINS FACTORY (*Continued*)

AND so it came about that tapestry fell from the walls, shrunk like a pricked balloon and landed in miniature on chairs, sofas and screens.

How felt the artists about this domesticating of their art? We are not told of the wry face they made when, with ideals in their souls, they were set to compose chair-seats for the Pompadour. Her preference was for Boucher. Perhaps his revenge showed itself by treating the bourgeoise courtisane to a bit of coarseness now and then, slyly hid in dainties.

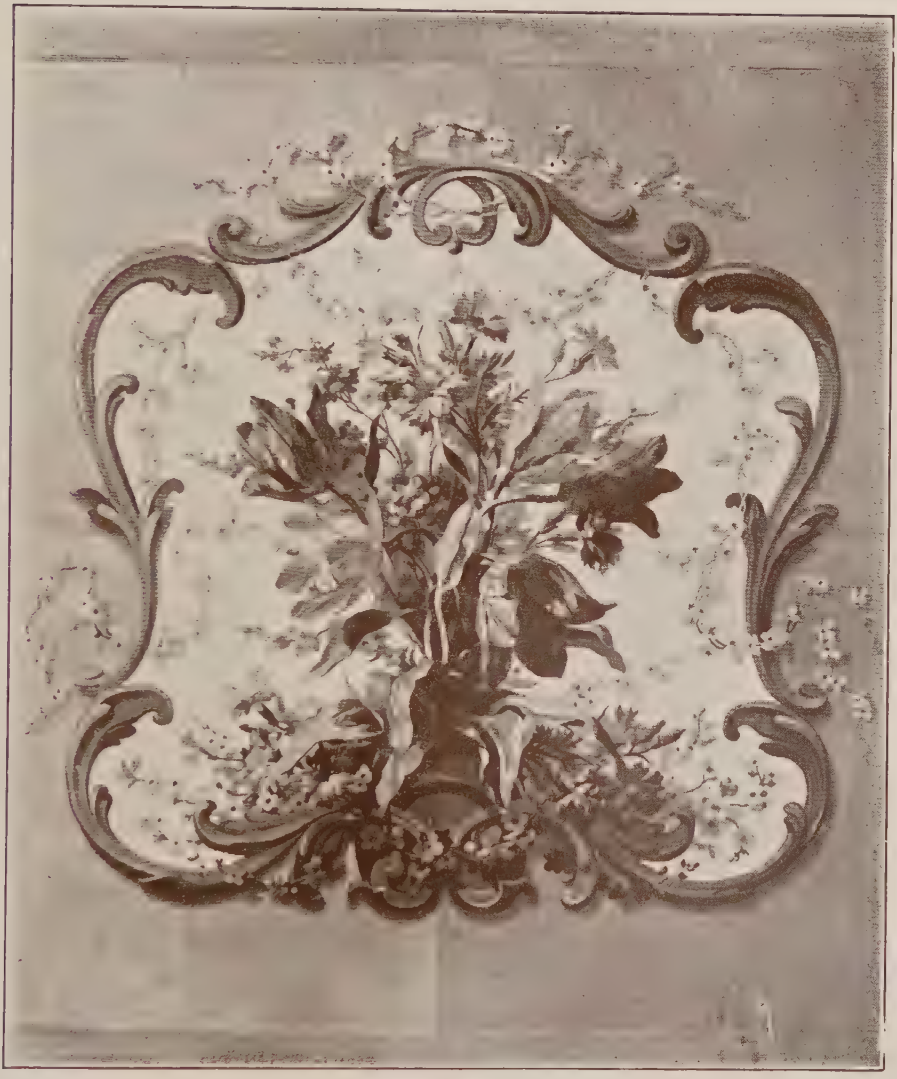
The artist, Louis Tessier, appeased himself by composing for furniture a design of simple bouquets of flowers thrown on a damask background; but, with such surety of hand, such elegance, are these ornaments designed and composed, that he who but runs past them must feel the power of their exquisite beauty.

In this manufacture of small pieces the Gobelins factory unhappily put itself on the same footing as Beauvais and much confusion of the products has since resulted. The dignity of the art was lowered when the size and purpose of tapestries were reduced to mere furniture coverings. The age of Louis XV, looked at decoratively, was an age of miniature, and the reign that followed was the same. When small chambers came into vogue, furniture diminished to suit them, and not only were walls too small for tapestries to hang on, but chairs, sofas and screens offered less space than ever before for woven designs, now preciously fine in quality and minutiæ.

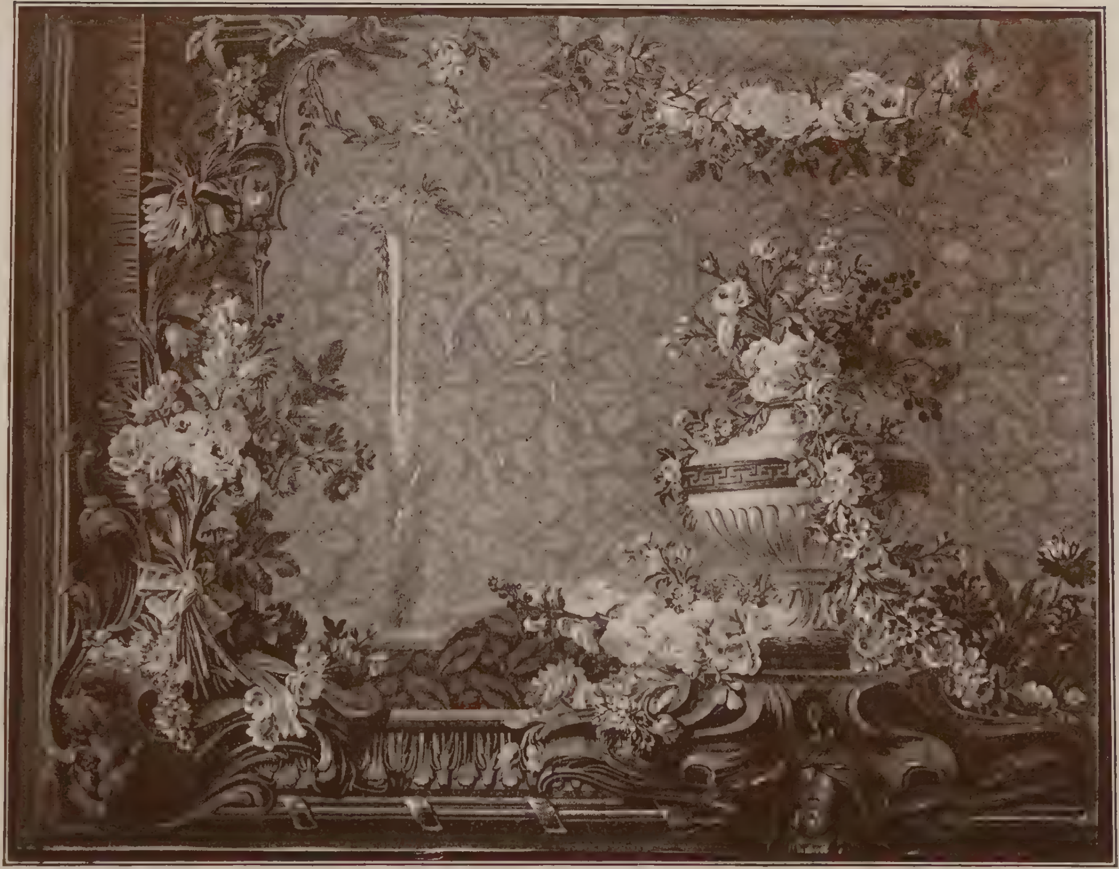
Tapestry weaving now entered the region of fancy-work for the drawing-room's idle hour, and we see even the king himself, lounging idly among his favourite companions, working at a tiny loom, his latest pretty toy. Compare this trifling with the attitude of Henri IV and Louis XIV toward tapestry weaving, and we have the situation in a nutshell.

Louis XV passed from the scene, likewise the charming bits of immorality who danced through his reign. However much we may disapprove their manner of life, we are ever glad that their taste sanctioned—more than that—urged, the production of a decorative style almost unsurpassed. To the artists belong the glory, but times were such that an artist must die of suppression if those in power refuse to patronise his art. So we are glad that Antoinette Poisson appreciated art, and that Jeanne Verbernier made of it a serious consideration, for, what was liked by La Pompadour and Du Barry must needs be favoured by the king.

When Louis XVI came to the throne, the return to antiquity for inspiration had already begun, but did not fully develop until later on, when David became court painter under Napoleon. Yet the tonic note of decoration was classic. Designs were still small and details were from Greek inspiration. As tapestries were still but furniture coverings, this was not to be regretted, for noth-



CHAIR OF TAPESTRY. STYLE OF LOUIS XV



GOBELINS TAPESTRY (DETAIL) CRAMOISÉE. STYLE LOUIS XV ing could be better suited to small spaces, nor could drawing be more exquisitely pure and chaste than when copied from Greek detail.

Count d'Angivillier kept the Gobelins factory from all originality, sanctioned only the small wares for original work, and forced a slavish copying of paintings for the larger pieces. It is not deniable that some beautiful hangings were produced, but the sad result is that pieces of so many tones lose in value year by year, through the gentle, inexorable touch of time; and, more deplorable yet, the ambition and the originality of the master-weavers was deprived of its very life-blood, and in time was utterly atrophied.

In the time of Louis XVI, when Marie Antoinette was in the flower of her inconsiderate elegance, the note of the day was for art to be small, but perfect; the worth of a work of art was determined by its size—in inverse ratio. It was a time lively and intellectual and frivolous, and its art was the reflection of its desire for concentrated completeness.

In the reign of Louis XVI ripened, not the art of Louis XIV, but the political situation whose seeds he had planted. The idea of revolution which started in the little-considered American colonies, took hold of the thinkers of France, even to the king of little power. But instead of being a theory of remedy for important men to discuss, it acted as a fire-brand thrown among the inflammable, long-oppressed Third Estate—with results deplorable to the art which occupies our attention.

The Gobelins was already suffering at the début of the

Revolution. Its management had been relegated to men more or less incapable; its art standards had been forced lower and lower. Added to that its operatives were engaged at lessened rates and often had to whistle for their pay at that. The contractors asked for nothing better than to be engaged as masters of ateliers at fixed rates.

Then came the full force of the Revolution with such deplorable and tragic results for the Gobelins. In the madness of the time the workers here were not exempt from the terrible call of Robespierre. The almoner of the factory was arrested, and at the end of two months not even a record existed of his execution, which took place among the daily feasts of La Guillotine. A high-warp weaver named Mangelschot met the same fate. Jean Audran, once contractor for high-warp, then placed at the head of the factory, was arrested, but escaped with imprisonment only.

During his absence he was replaced as head by Augustin Belle, whose respect for the Republic and for his head made him curry favour with the mob in a manner most deplorable. He caused the destruction by fire of many and many a superb tapestry at the Gobelins, giving as his reason that they contained emblems of royalty, reminders of the hated race of kings. The amateur can almost weep in thinking of this ruthless waste of beauty.

It was a celebrated bonfire that was built in the courtyard of the Gobelins when, by order of the Committee on Selection, all things offensive to an over-sensitive republican irritability were heaped for the holocaust. As the Gobelins was instituted by a king, patronised by kings, its works made in the main for palaces and pageants after the taste of kings, it was only too easy to find tapestries meet for a fire that had as object the destruction of articles displaying monarchical power.

During the four horrid years when terror reigned, the workers at the Gobelins continued under a constant threat of a cessation of work. Not only was their pay irregular, but it was often given in paper that had sadly depreciated in value. Then the decision was made to sell certain valuable tapestries and pay expenses from this source of revenue. But, alas, in those troublous times, who had heart or purse to acquire works of art. A whole skin and food to sustain it, were the serious objects of life.

Under the Directory, funds were scarce in bleeding France, and all sorts of ways were used to raise them. In the past times when Louis XIV had by relentless extravagance and wars depleted the purse, he caused the patiently wrought precious metals to be melted into bullion. Why not now resort to a similar method? So thought a minister of one of the Two Chambers, and suggested the burning of certain tapestries of the royal collection in order that the gold and silver used in their weaving might be converted into metal.

Sixty pieces, the most superb specimens of a king's collection, were transported to the court of La Monnaie, and there burned to the last thread the wondrous work of hundreds of talented artists and artisans. The very smoke must have rolled out in pictures. The money gained was considerable, 60,000 livres, showing how richly endowed with metal threads were these sumptuous hangings. The commission sitting by, judicial, dispassionate, presided with cold dignity over the sacrifice, and pronounced it good.

A hundred workers only remained at the Gobelins which had once been a happy hive of more than eight times that number, and these were constrained to follow orders most objectionable and restrictive. Models to copy were chosen by a jury of art, and such were its prejudices that but little of interest remained. Ancient religious suites, and royal ones were disapproved. New orders consisted of portraits. But if we thought it a prostitution of the art to weave portraits of Louis XV in royal costume, or Marie Antoinette in the loveliness of her queenly fripperies, what can be said of the low estate of a factory which must give out a portrait of Marat or Lepelletier, even though the great David painted the design to be copied. The hundred men at the Gobelins must have worked but sadly and desultorily over such scant and distasteful commissioning.

There were works upon the looms when the Commission began inspecting the works of art to see if they were proper stuff for the newly-made Republic to nurse upon. In September, 1794, they found and condemned twelve large pieces on the looms unfinished, and on which work was immediately suspended. Of three hundred and twenty-one models examined, which were the property of the factory, one hundred and twenty were rejected. In fact, only twenty were designated as truly fit for production, not falling under the epithets "anti-republican, fanatic or insufficient." The latter description was applied to all those exquisite fantasies of art that make the periods Louis XV and Louis XVI a source of transcendent delight to the lover of dainty intellectual design, and include particularly the work of Boucher.

The mental and moral workings of the commission on art may be tested by quoting from their own findings on the *Siege of Calais,* a hanging by Berthélemy, depicting an event of the Fourteenth Century. This is what the temper of the times induced the Commission—among whom were artists too—to say: "Subject regarded as contrary to republican ideas; the pardon accorded to the people of Calais was given by a tyrant through the tears and supplications of the queen and child of a despot. Rejected. In consequence the tapestry will be arrested in its execution."

The models allowed in this benumbing period were those of hunting scenes, and antique groups such as the *Muses,* or scenes from the life of Achilles.

A vicious system of pay was added to the vicious system of art restriction. And so fell the Gobelins, to revive in such small manner as was accorded it in the Nineteenth Century.

Its great work was done. It had lifted up an art which through inflation or barrenness Brussels had let train on the ground like a fallen flag, and it had given to France the glory of acquiring the highest period of perfection.

To France came the inspiration of gathering the industry under the paternal care of the government, of relieving it from the exigencies of private enterprise which must of necessity fluctuate, of keeping the art in dignified prosperity, and of devoting to its uses the highest talent of both art and industry.

The Revolution and the Directory both hesitated to kill an institution that had brought such glory to France, that had placed her above all the world in tapestry producing. But what deliberate intent did not accomplish, came near being a fact through scant rations. Operators at the Gobelins were irregularly paid, and the public purse found onerous the burden of support.

But with the coming of Napoleon the personal note was struck again. A man was at the head, a man whose ambition invaded even the field of decoration. The Emperor would not be in the least degree inferior in splendour to the most magnificent of the hereditary kings of France. The Gobelins had been their glory, it should add to his.

Louis David was the painter of the court, he whose head was ever turned over his shoulder toward ancient Greece and Rome, who not only preferred that source of inspiration, but who realised the flattery implied to the Emperor by using the designs of the countries he had conquered. It was a graceful reminder of the trophies of war.

So David not only painted Josephine as a lady of Pompeii elongated on a Greek lounge, but he set the classic style for the Gobelins factory when Napoleon gave to the looms his imperial patronage. It was David who had found favour with Revolutionary France by his untiring efforts to produce a style differing fundamentally from the style of kings, when kings and their ways were un·

popular. Technical exactness, with classic motives, characterises his decorative work for the Gobelins.

The Emperor was hot for throne-room fittings that spoke only of himself and of the empire he had built. David made the designs, beautiful, chaste, as his invention ever was, and dotted them with the inevitable bees and eagles. Percier, the artist, helped with the painting, but the throne itself was David's and shows his talent in the floating Victory of the back and the conventionalised wreaths of the seat. The whole set, important enough to mention, embraced eight arm chairs and six smaller ones, besides two dozen classic seats of a kingly pattern, and screens for fire and draughts, all with a red background on which was woven in gold the pattern of wreaths and branches of laurel and oak.

The Emperor made the Gobelins his especial care. He committed it to the discretion of no one, but was himself the director, and allowed no loom to set up its patterns unsanctioned by his order. Even his campaigns left this order operative. Is it to his credit as a genius, or his discredit as a tyrant, that the chiefs of the Gobelins had to follow him almost into battle to get permission to weave a new hanging?

Portraits were woven—but let us not dwell on that. That portraits were woven at the Gobelins (portraits as such, not the resemblance of one figure out of a mass to some great personage) brings ever a sigh of regret. It is like the evidence of senility in some grand statesman who has outlived his vigour. It is like the portrait of your friend done in butter, or the White House at Washington done in a paste of destroyed banknotes. In other words, there is no excuse for it while paint and canvas exist.

Napoleon's own portrait was made in full length twice, and in bust ten times. The Empress was pictured at full length and in bust, and the young King of Rome came in for one portrait. The summit of bad art seemed reached when it was proposed to copy in wool a painting of portrait busts, carved in marble. This work was happily unfinished when the empire gave place to the next form of government.

It is unthinkable that Napoleon would not want his reign glorified in manner like to that of hereditary kings with pictured episodes, the conquests of his life, dramatic, superb. David the court painter, supplied his canvas *Napoleon Crossing the Alps,* and others followed. Copying paintings was the order at the Gobelins, remember, and that kind of work was done with infinite skill. Numbers of grand scenes were planned, some set up on the looms, but the great part were not done at all. Napoleon's triumph was full but brief; the years of his reign were few. He interrupted work on large hangings by his impatience to have the throne-room furniture ready for the reception of Europe's kings and ambassadors. And when the time came that another man received in that room, the big series of hangings which were to picture his reign, even as the *Life of the King* pictured that of Louis XIV, were scarcely begun.

CHAPTER XIV

BEAUVAIS

ANOTHER name to conjure with, after Gobelins is Beauvais. In general it means to us squares of beautiful foliage,—foliage graceful, acceptably coloured, and of a pre-Raphaelite neatness. But it is not limited to that class of work, nor yet to the chair-coverings for which the factory of Beauvais is so justly celebrated. This factory has woven even the magnificent series of Raphael, the designs without which the Sistine Chapel was considered incomplete. But this is anticipating, and an inquiry into how these things came about is a pleasure too great to miss.

The factory at Beauvais was founded by Colbert, under Louis XIV, in 1664. In that respect it resembles the Gobelins factory, but there existed an enormous difference which had to do with the entire fate of the enterprise. The Gobelins was founded for the king; Beauvais was founded for commerce. The Gobelins was royally conceived as a source of supply for palaces and châteaux of royalty and royalty's friends. Beauvais was intended to supply with tapestry any persons who cared to buy them, to the end that profit (if profit there were) should be to the good of the country.

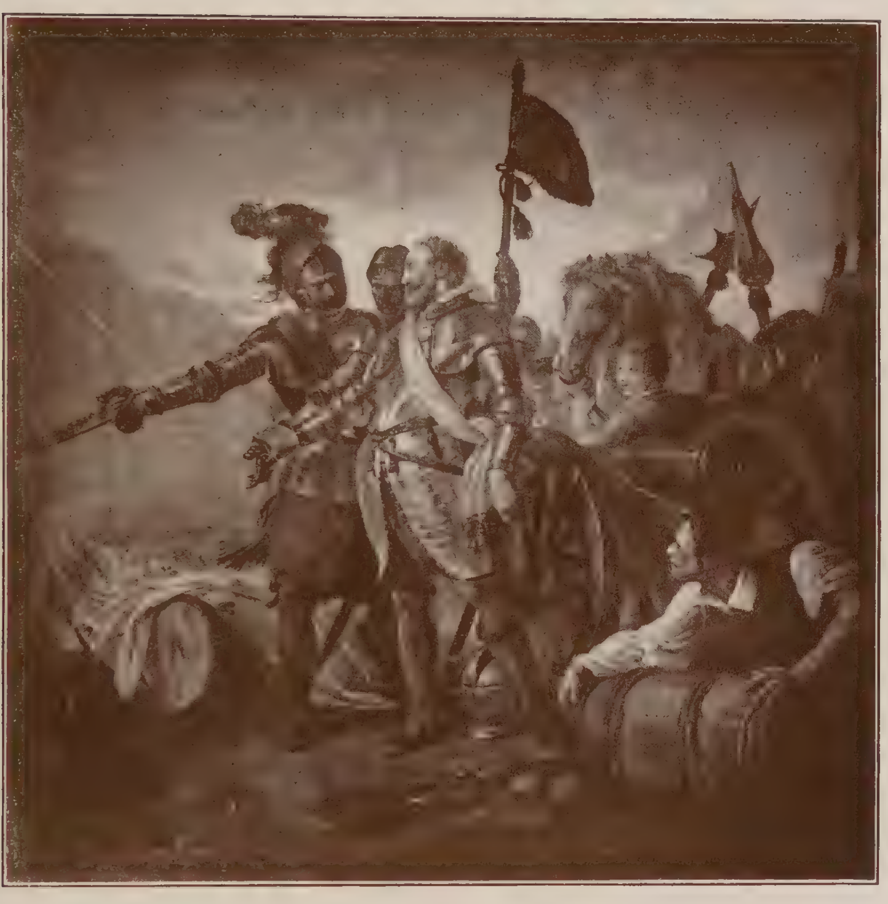
So the factory was founded at Beauvais as being convenient to Paris, although it was not known as a place where the industry had flourished hitherto, notwithstanding the old tapestries still in the cathedral which are accorded a local origin in the first half of the Sixteenth Century. And the king granted it letters patent, and large sums of money to start the enterprise, which had to be given a building, and men to manage it and to work therein, and materials to work with, in fact, the duplicate in less degree of the appropriations for the Gobelins, except that the furniture department was omitted.

The idea was practically the same as that in the mind of the paternal Henri IV when he united the scattered factories with royal interest and patronage, but with always the large end in view of benefiting his people financially, as well as in the province of art. With our modern republican views we can criticise the disinterestedness of a monarch who maintains a factory at enormous public expense exclusively for the indulgence of kings.

And yet, it seems impossible to make both an artistic and commercial success of a tapestry factory—at least this is the conclusion to which one is forced in a study of the Beauvais factory.

Louis Hinart was the man appointed to construct the buildings and to stock them, and the royal appropriation therefor, was 60,000 livres. He was to engage a hundred workers for the first year, more to be added; and special prizes were temptingly offered for workmen coming from other countries, and to the contractor for each tapestry sold for exportation.

Thus was trade to be encouraged, and the venture put



HENRI IV BEFORE PARIS
Beauvais Tapestry, Seventeenth Century. Design by Vincent

HENRI IV AND GABRIELLE D'ESTRÉES
Design by Vincent

on its feet commercially. But alas, the factory was not a success. Tapestries were woven, hundreds of them, and they delight us now wherever we can find them, whether low warp or high, whether large pieces with figures or smaller pieces almost entirely verdure of an entrancing kind. But the orders for large hangings, the heavy patronage from outside France, was of the imagination only, and the verdures for home consumption did not meet the expenses of the factory. After twenty years of struggle, Hinart was completely ruined and ceded the direction of the factory to a Fleming of Tournai, Philip Béhagle. As most of the workers were Flemish, this was probably not disagreeable to them.

Béhagle, more energetic than Hinart, with a gift for initiative, set the high-warp looms to work with extraordinary activity. As though he would rival the great Gobelins itself, he reproduced the most ambitious of pieces, the Raphael series, *Acts of the Apostles,* and a long list of ponderous groups wherein oversized gods disport themselves in a heavy setting of architecture and voluminous draperies. He also produced some contemporary battle scenes which are now in the royal collection of Sweden.

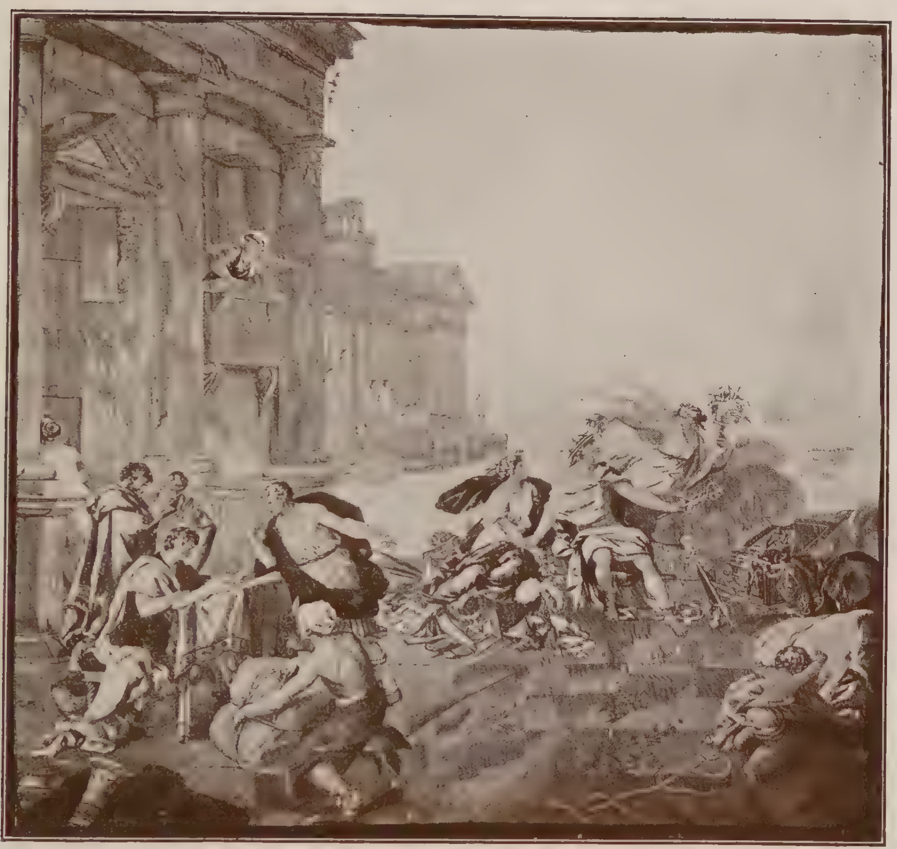
Not content with copying, Béhagle set up a school of design in the factory, realising that the base of all decorative art was design. Le Pape was the artist set over it. From this grew many of the lovely smaller patterns which have made the factory famous. Its garlands have ever been inspired, and its work on borders is of exquisite conception and execution.

It is considered a great fact in the history of the factory that the king paid it a visit in 1686; that he paraded and rested his important person under the shade of the living verdure in its garden. But it seems more to the point that Béhagle made for it a success both artistic and commercial, and this continued as long as he had breath.

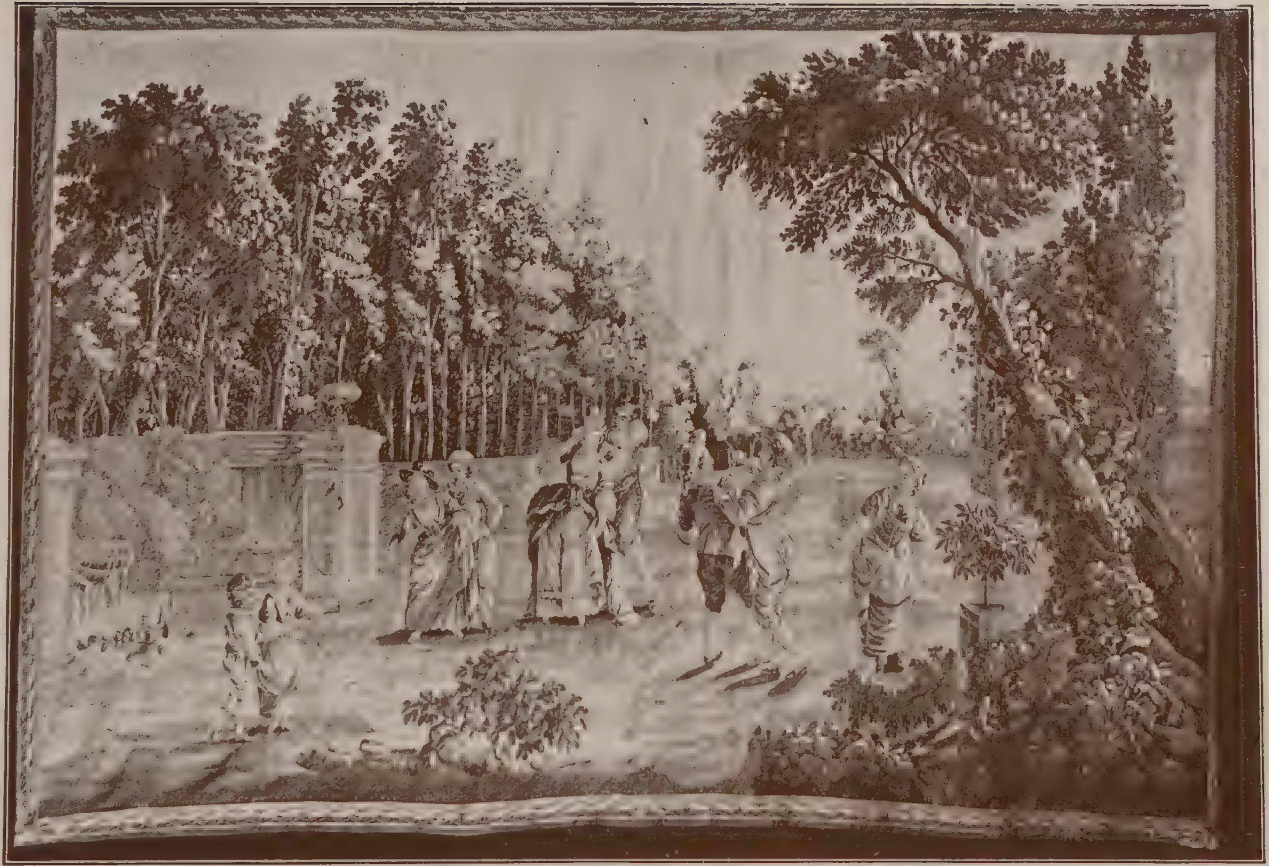
Also was it a feather in his cap that at the time when the Gobelins factory was sighing and dying for lack of funds, the provincial factory of Beauvais not only remained prosperous, but opened its doors to many of the starving operatives from the Gobelins ateliers, thus saving them from the horrid fate of joining the Dragonades, as some of their fellows had done.

But the followers of the able Béhagle had not his capability. After his twenty years of prosperity the factory languished under the direction of his widow and sons, and that of the brothers Filleul, and Micou, up to the time when the Regent Philip was fumbling the reigns of government, and when everything but scepticism and Les Precieuses was sinking into feeble disintegration. The factory became a financial failure from which the regent had not power to lift it.

Again we see the name of the son of Madame de Montespan, the Duke d'Antin, who was at this time director of buildings for the crown and in this capacity had the power of choosing the directors of both the Gobelins and Beauvais. The place of director at Beauvais was empty; d'Antin must have the credit of filling it wisely with the painter Jean-Baptiste Oudry. He was a man endowed with the sort of energy we are apt to consider modern and



BEAUVAIS TAPESTRY. EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



BEAUVAIS TAPESTRY. TIME OF LOUIS XVI
Collection of Wm. Baumgarten, Esq., New York

American. He already occupied a high place in the Gobelins, and retained it, too, while he lifted Beauvais from the Slough of Despond, and carried it to its most brilliant flowering.

It is only as the history of a factory touches us that we are interested in its changes. The result of Oudry's direction is one that we see so frequently in a small way that it is agreeable to recognise its cause. Oudry was pre-eminently a painter of animals. Add to this the tendency to draw cartoons in suites and the demand for furniture coverings, and at once we have the *raison d'être* of the design seen over and over again nowadays on old tapestried chairs, the designs picturing the *Fables of La Fontaine*. These were the especial work of Oudry who composed them, who put into them his best work as animal painter, and who set them on the looms of Beauvais many times.

They had a success immediate. They became the fashion of the day, and the pride of the factory. If the artist had drawn with inspiration, the weavers copied with a fidelity little short of talent. So it is not surprising that a set of sofa and chairs on which these tapestries are displayed brings now an average of a thousand dollars a piece, even though the furniture frames are not excessively rich.

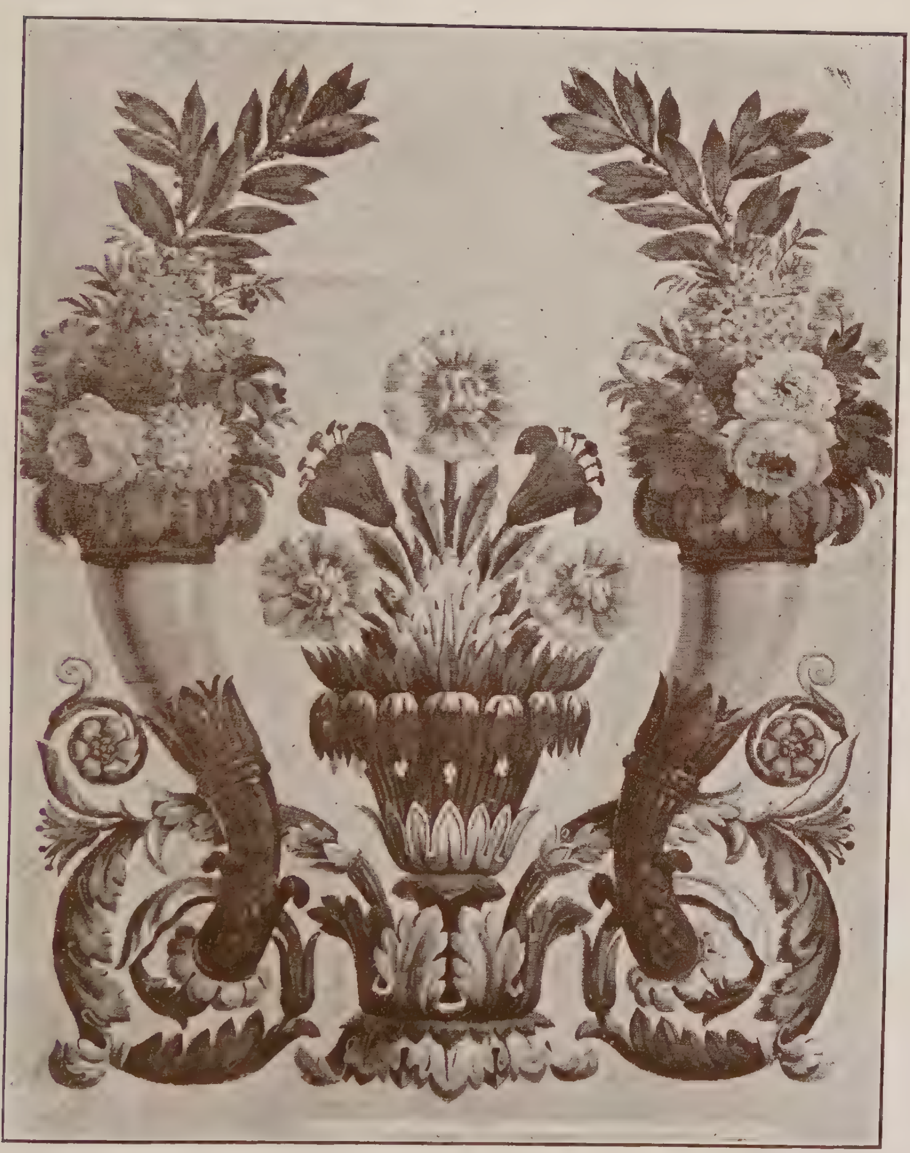
Beauvais set the fashion for this suite, but as success has imitators who hope for success, many factories both in and out of France copied this series. How shall we know the true from the false? By that sixth sense that has its origin in a taste at once instinctive and cultivated.

Oudry drew hangings for the small panelled spaces of the walls, to accompany this set of *Fables*. He also painted scenes from Molière's comedies, which at least show him master of the human figure as well as of the lines of animals.

We are now, it must be remembered, in the time of Louis XV, the time of beautiful gaiety and light sarcasm, of epigramme, and miniature, and of all that declared itself *multum in parvo*. Therefore it was that even wall-hangings were reduced in size and polished, so to speak, to a perfection most admirable. Paintings were copied, actually copied, on the looms, but however much the fact may be deplored that tapestry had wandered far from its original days of grand simplicity, it were unjust not to recognise the exquisite perfection of the manner in vogue in the middle of the Eighteenth Century, and of the perfection of the craftsman.

The pieces of Beauvais that are accessible to us are indeed charming to live with, especially the verdures of Oudry on which he left the trace of his talent, never omitting the characteristic fox or dog, or ducks, or pheasants that give vital interest to a peep into the enchanted woodland. At the same time the factory of Aubusson, and looms in Flanders, were throwing upon the market a quantity of verdures, of which the amateur must beware. Oudry verdures or outdoor scenes are but few in model, and beautifully woven.

In the prosperity of Beauvais, ambition carried Oudry into a gay rivalry with the Gobelins. Charles Coypel had gained fame by a set of hangings in which scenes were



BEAUVAIS TAPESTRY. TIME OF LOUIS XIV

taken from Don Quixote. Oudry asked himself why he should not rival them at Beauvais. The result was a similar series, but composed by Charles Natoire, the artist who had drawn a set of *Antony and Cleopatra* for the Gobelins. The same idea extended to the furniture coverings which ran to this design as well as to the *Fables*. Thus originated a set familiar to those of us nowadays who covet and who buy the rare old bits that the niggard hand of the past accords to the seeker after the ancient.

Exquisite indeed are the hangings by the great interpreter of the spirit of his time, François Boucher. His designs broke from the limit of the Gobelins, and were woven at Beauvais with the care and skill required for proper interpretation of his land of mythology. Such flushed skies of light, such clean, soft trees waving against them and such human elegance and beauty grouped beneath, have seldom been reproduced in tapestry, and almost make one wonder if, after all, the weavers of the Eighteenth Century were not right in copying a finished painting rather than in interpreting a decorative cartoon. But such thoughts border on heresy and schism; away with them.

Casanova, Leprince, and a host of others are tacked onto the list of artists who painted models. We can no longer call them cartoons, so changed is the mode for Beauvais. But Oudry and Boucher are pre-eminent.

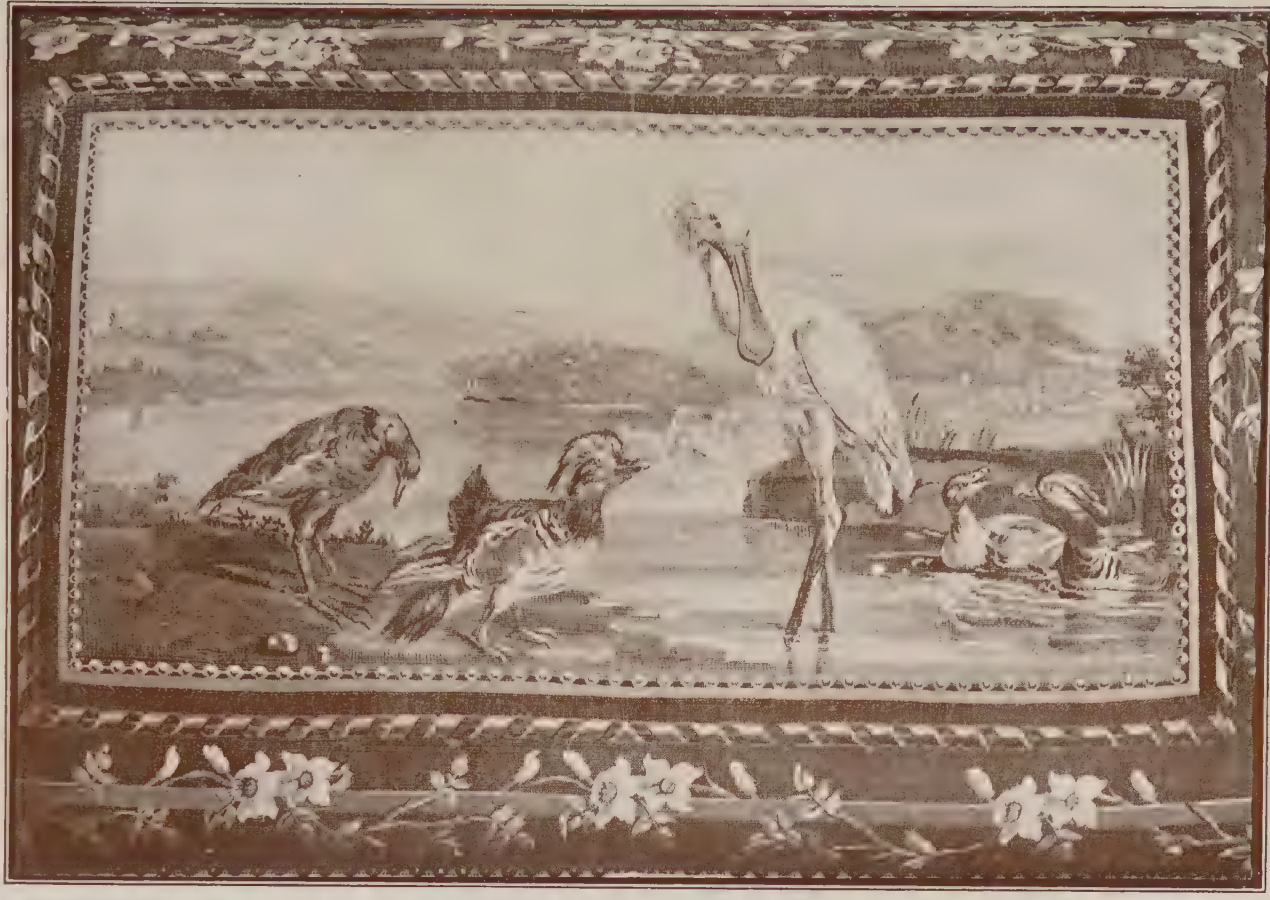
To the former, who was director as well as artist, is attributed the fame of the factory and the resulting commercial success. The factory had a house for selling its wares under the very nose of the Gobelins; had another in the enemy's country, Leipzig. And kings were the patrons of these, as we know through the royal collections in Italy, and Stockholm, where the King of Sweden was an important collector.

It was in 1755 that Beauvais found itself without the support of its leaders. Both Oudry and his partner in business matters, Besnier, had died. And we are well on toward the time when kingly support was a feeble and uncertain quantity. The factory lacked the inspiration and patronage to continue its importance.

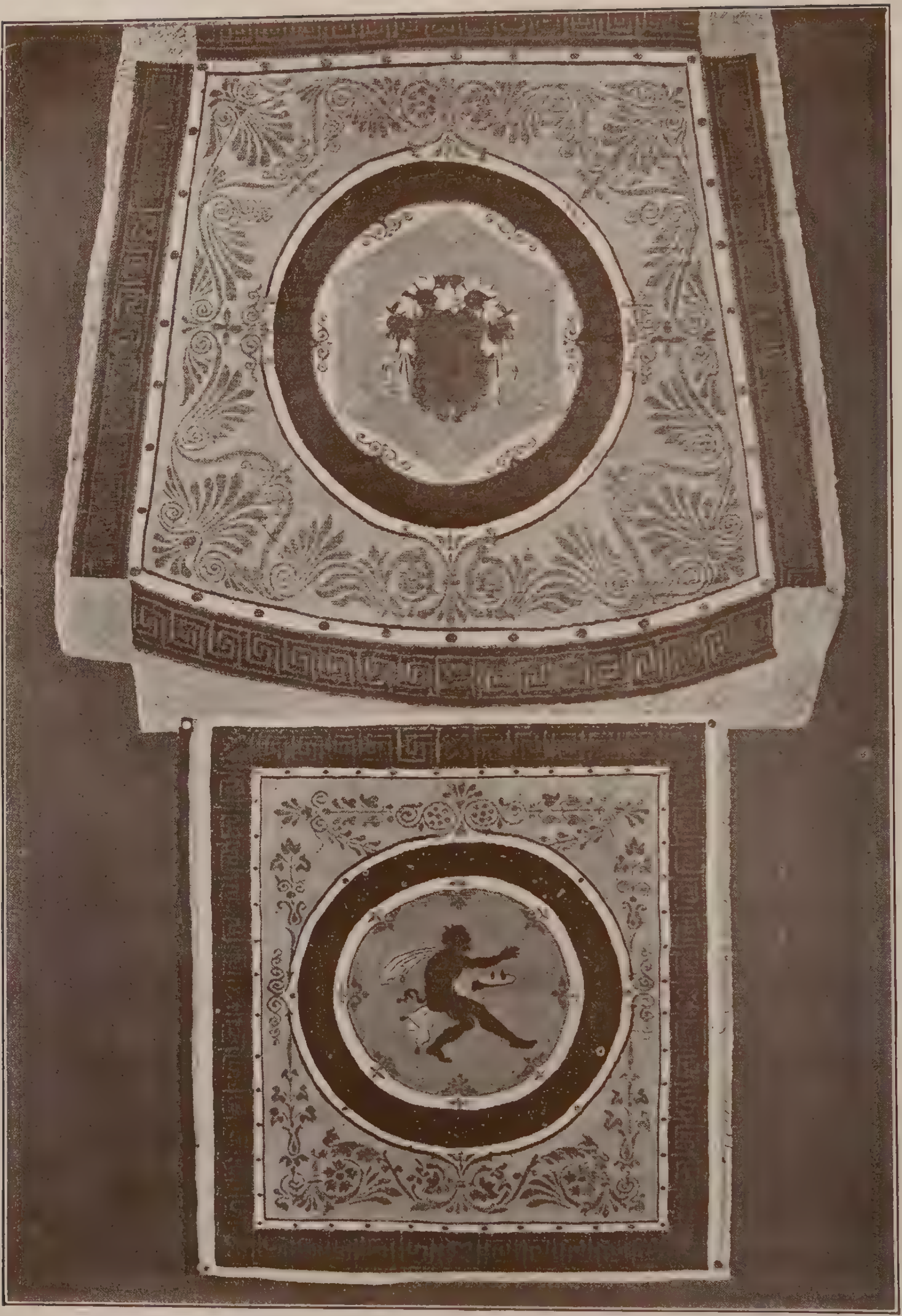
In a few years more fell the blight of the Revolution. The factory was closed.

It re-opened again under new conditions, but its brilliant period was past. Will the conditions recur that can again elevate to its former state of perfection this factory that has given such keen delight, whose ancient works are so prized by the amateur? It has given us thrilling examples of the highly developed taste of tapestry weaving of the Eighteenth Century, it has left us lovable designs in miniature. We repulse the thought that these things are all of the past. The factory still lives. Will not the Twentieth Century see a restoration of its former prestige?

If it were only for the reproduction of the sets of furniture of the style known as Louis XVI, the Beauvais loom would have sufficient reason for existing at the present day. Scenes from Don Quixote, however, and the pictured fables of La Fontaine which we see on old chairs, seem to need age to ripen them. These sets, when made new, shown in all the freshness and unsoiled colour, and unworn wool, and unfaded silk do not give pleasure.



BEAUVAIS TAPESTRY



CHAIR COVERING
Beauvais Tapestry. First Empire

But the familiar garlands and scrolls adapted from the Greek, that were woven for the court of Marie Antoinette, these are ever old and ever new, like all things vital. On a background of solid colour, pale and tawny, is curved the foliated scroll to reach the length of a sofa, and with this is associated garlands or sprays of flowers that any flower-lover would worship. Nothing more graceful nor more tasteful could be conceived, and by such work is the Beauvais factory best known, and on such lines might it well continue.

CHAPTER XV

AUBUSSON

PERHAPS because of certain old and elegant carpets lying under-foot in the glow and shadows of old drawing-rooms that we love, the name of Aubusson is one of interesting meaning. And yet history of tapestry weaving at Aubusson lacks the importance that gilds the Gobelins and Beauvais.

It just escaped that *sine qua non,* the dower of a king's favour. But let us be chronological, and not anticipate.

If antiquity is the thing, Aubusson claims it. There is in the town this interesting tradition that when the invincible Charles Martel beat the enemies of Christianity and hammered out the word peace with his sword-blade, a lot of the subdued Saracens from Spain remained in the neighbourhood. It was at Poitiers in 732 that the final blow was given to show the hordes of North Africa that while a part of Spain might be theirs, they must stop below the Pyrenees.

When swords are put by, the empty hand turns to its accustomed crafts of peace. Poitiers is a weary journey from Africa if the land ways are hostile, and all to be traversed afoot. Rather than return, the conquered Saracens stayed, so runs the legend of Aubusson, and quite naturally fell into their home-craft of weaving. They had a pretty gift indeed to bestow, for at that time, as in ages before, the world's best fabrics came from the luxurious East. And so the Saracens, defeated at Poitiers by Charles Martel, wandered to nearby Aubusson, wove their cloths and gave the town the chance to set its earliest looms at a date far back in the past.

The centuries went on, however, without much left in the way of history-fabric or woven fabric until we approach the time when tapestry-history begins all over France, like sparse flowers glowing here and there in the early spring wood.

When the Great Louis, with Colbert at his sumptuous side, was by way of patronising magnificently those arts which contributed to his own splendour, he set his all-seeing eye upon Aubusson, and thought to make it a royal factory.

He was far from establishing it—that was more than accomplished already, not so much by the legendary Saracens as by the busy populace who had as early as 1637 as many as two thousand workers. Going back a little farther we find a record of four tapestries woven there for Rheims.

It was, perhaps, this very prosperity, this ability to stand alone that made Louis and Colbert think it worth while to patronise the works at Aubusson. But it must be said that at this time (1664) the factory was deteriorating. Tapestry works are as sensitive as the veriest exotic, and without the proper conditions fail and fade. The wrong matter here was primarily the cartoons, which were of the poorest. No artist controlled them, and the workers strayed far from the copy set long before.

Added to that, the wool was of coarse, harsh quality and the dyeing was badly done. All three faults remediable, thought the two chief forces in the kingdom.

So Louis XIV announced to the sixteen hundred weavers of Aubusson that he would give their works the conspicuous privilege of taking on the name of the Royal Manufactory at Aubusson. And, moreover, he declared his wish to send them an artist to draw worthily, and a master of the important craft of dyeing fast and lovely colours.

Colbert drew up a series of articles and stipulations, long papers of rules and restrictions which were considered a necessary part of fine tapestry weaving. These papers are tiresome to read—the constitution of many a nation or a state is far less verbose. They give the impression that the craft of tapestry weaving is beset with every sort of small deceit, so protection must be the arrangement between master and worker, and between the factory and the great outside world, lying in wait to tear with avaricious claws any fabric, woven or written, that this document leaves unprotected. You get, too, the impression that weavers took themselves a little too seriously. There must have been other arts and crafts in the world than theirs, but if so these men of long documents ignored it.

Aubusson, then, took heart at the encouragement of the king and his prime minister, enjoyed their fine new title to flaunt before the world which lacked it, pored over their new Articles of Faith, and awaited the new artist and the new alchemist of colours.

But Louis XIV was a busy man, and Paris presented enough activity to consume all his hours but the scant group he allowed himself for sleep. So Aubusson was forgot. Wars and pleasures both ravaged the royal purse, and no money was left for indulgences to a tapestry factory lying leagues distant from Paris and the satisfying Gobelins.

Then came the agitation of religious conflict during which Louis XIV was persuaded, coerced, nagged into the condition of mind which made him put pen to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the document that is ever playing about the fortunes of tapestry weaving. This was in 1685. Aubusson had struggled along on hope for twenty years, under its epithet Royal, but now it had to lose its best workers to the number of two hundred. The Protestants had ever been among the best workers in Louis' kingdom, and by his prejudice he lost them. Germany received some of the fugitives, notably, Pierre Mercier.

Near Aubusson were Felletin and Bellegarde, the three towns forming the little group of factories of La Marche. When the king's act brought disaster to Aubusson, her two neighbours suffered equally.

There was also another reason for a sagging of prosperity. Beauvais was rapidly gaining in size and importance under the patronage of the king and the wise rule of its administrators. Beauvais with her high- and low-warp looms, her artists from Paris and her privilege to sell in the open market, lured from Aubusson the patronage that might have kept her strong.

Thus things went on to the end of the Seventeenth Century and the first quarter of the Eighteenth. Then in 1731 came deliverers in the persons of the painters, Jean Joseph du Mons and Pierre de Montezert, and an able dyer who aided them. Prosperity began anew. Not the prosperity of the first half of the Seventeenth Century, which was its best period, but a strong, healthy productiveness which has lasted ever since. Two articles of faith it adheres to—that the looms shall be invariably low, and that the threads of the warp shall be of wool and wool only.

Large quantities of strong-colour verdures from La Marche and notably from Aubusson are offered to the buyer throughout France. They are as easily adapted to the wood panels of a modern dining-room as is stuff by the yard, the pattern being merely a mass of trees divisible almost anywhere. The colour scheme is often worked out in blues instead of greens; a narrow border is on undisturbed pieces, and the reverse of the tapestry is as full of loose threads as the back of a cashmere rug. For the most part these fragments are the work of the Eighteenth Century. Older ones, with warmer colours introduced bring much higher prices.

CHAPTER XVI

SAVONNERIE

THOSE who hold by the letter, leave out the velvety product of La Savonnerie from the aristocratic society of hangings woven in the classic stitch of the Gobelins. They have reason. Yet, because the weave is one we often see in galleries, also on furniture both old and new, it is as well not to ignore its productions in lofty silence.

Besides, it is rather interesting, this little branch of an exotic industry that tried to run along beside the greater and more artistic. It never has tried to be much higher than a man's feet, has been content for the most part to soften and brighten floors that before its coming were left in the cold bareness of tile or parquet. It crept up to the backs and seats of chairs, and into panelled screens a little later on, but never has it had much vogue on the walls.

When we go back to its beginnings we come flat against the Far East, as is usual. The history of the fabric which is woven with a pile like that of heavy wool velvet, and which is called Savonnerie, runs parallel to the long story of tapestry proper, but to make its scant details one short concrete chronicle it is best to put them all together.

From the East, then, came the idea of weaving in that style of which only the people of the East were masters.

Oriental rugs as such were not attempted in either colour or design, but one of the rug stitches was copied.

We have to run back to the time of Henri IV, a pleasing time to turn to with its demonstration of how much a powerful king loved the welfare of his people. When he interested himself in tapestry, one of the three important existing factories was stationed in the Louvre. This was primarily for the hangings properly called tapestry, but in the same place were looms for the production of work "after the fashion of Turkey." Sometimes it was called work of "long wool" (*longue laine*) and sometimes also *"a la façon de Perse, ou du Levant,"* as well as "of the fashion of Turkey,"—all names giving credit to the East from whence the stitch came by means of crusades, invasions and other storied movements of the people of a dim past.

How long ago this stitch came, is as uncertain as most things in the Middle Ages. We know how persistently the cultivated venturesome East overflowed Eastern Europe, and how religious Europe thrust itself into the East, and on these broad bases we plant our imaginings.

Away back in Burgundian times there are traces of the use of this velvet stitch. Tapestries of Germany also woven in the Fifteenth Century, use this stitch to heighten the effect of details.

But the formation of an actual industry properly set down in history and dignified by the name of its directors, comes in the very first years of the Seventeenth Century when Henri IV of France was living up to his high ideals.

Pierre Dupont is the name to remember in this connexion. He is styled the inventor of the velvet pile in tapestry, but it were better to call him the adaptor. The name of Savonnerie came from the building in which the first looms were set up, an old soap factory, and thus the velvet pile bears the misnomer of the Savonnerie.

Pierre Dupont (whose book "La Stromaturgie" might be consulted by the book-lover) was one of the enthusiasts included by Henri IV along with the best high- and low-warp masters of France at that time. Being placed under royal patronage, the Savonnerie style of weaving acquired a dignity which it has ever had trouble in retaining for the simple reason that the legitimate place for its products seems to be the floor.

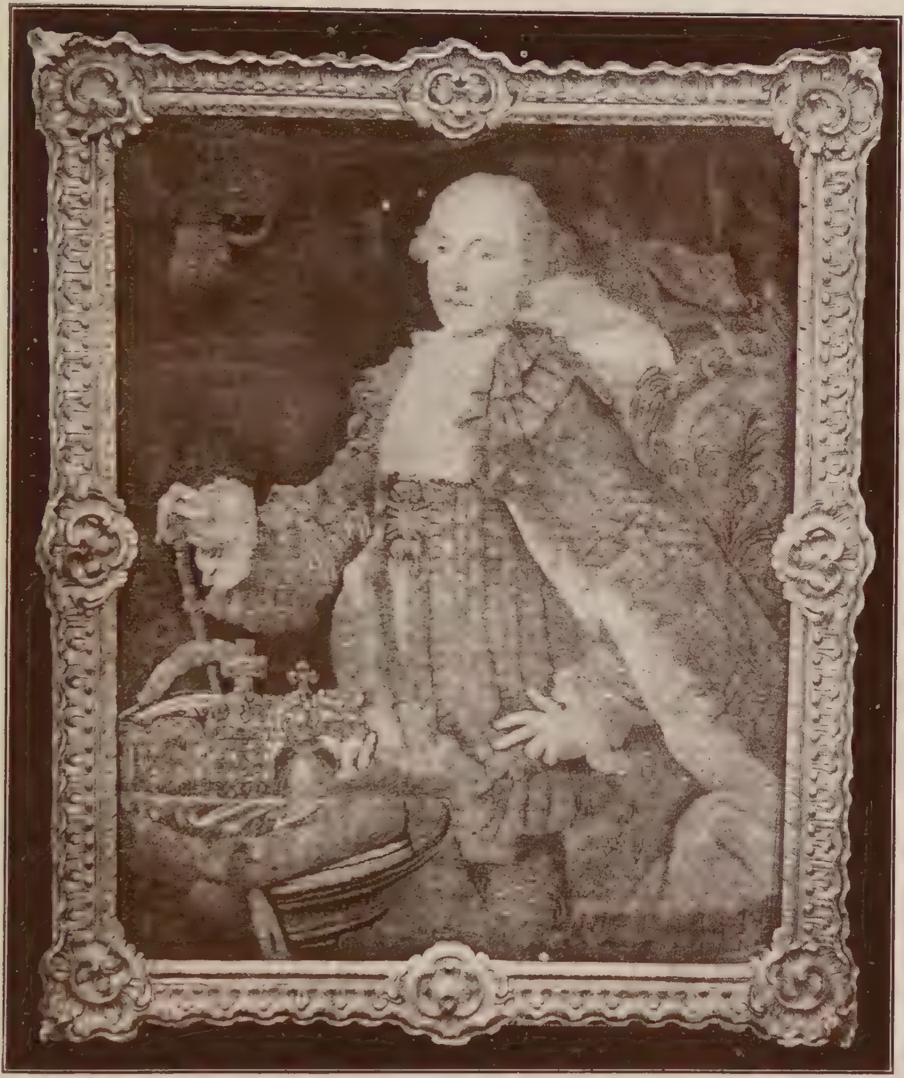
The Gobelins factory finally absorbed the Savonnerie, but that was after it had been established in the Louvre. Pierre Dupont who was director of tapestry works under Henri IV even goes so far as to vaunt the works of French production over those of "La Turquie." The taste of the day was doubtless far better pleased with the French colour and drawing than with the designs of the East.

At any rate, this pretty wool velvet found such favour with kings that even Louis XIV encouraged its continuance, gathering it under the roof of the all-embracing Gobelins.

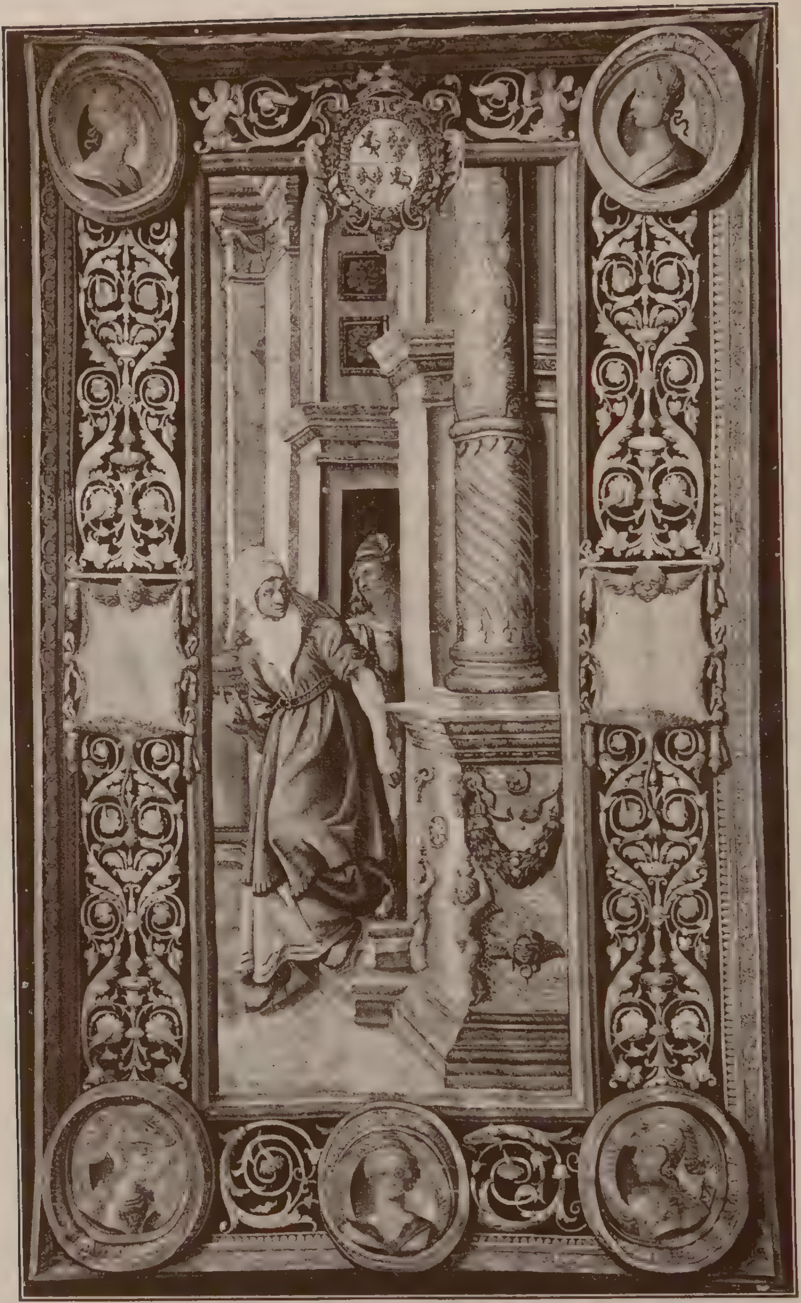
A large royal order embraced ninety-two pieces, intended to cover the Grand Galerie of the Louvre. Many of these pieces are preserved to-day and are conserved by the State.

If Savonnerie has never produced much that is note-worthy in the line of art, at least it has given us many pretty bits of an endearing softness, bits which cover a chair or panel a screen, to the delight of both eye and touch. The softness of the weave makes it especially appropriate to furniture of the age of luxurious interiors which is represented by the styles of Louis XV and Louis XVI.

Portraits in this style of weave were executed at a time when portraits were considered improved by translation into wool, but except as curiosities they are scarcely successful. An example hangs in the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. (Plate facing page 162.) In the Gobelins factory of to-day are four looms for the manufacture of Savonnerie.



SAVONNERIE. PORTRAIT SUPPOSABLY OF LOUIS XV
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



VULCAN AND VENUS SERIES. MORTLAKE
Collection of Philip Hiss, Esq., New York

CHAPTER XVII

MORTLAKE

1619–1703

THE three great epochs of tapestry weaving, with their three localities which are roughly classed as Arras in the Fifteenth Century, Brussels in the Sixteenth Century, and Paris in the Seventeenth, had, as a matter of course, many tributary looms. It is not supposable that a craft so simple, when it is limited to unambitious productions, should not be followed by hundreds of modest people whose highest wish was to earn a living by providing the market with what was then considered as much a necessity as chairs and tables.

To take a little retrospective journey through Europe and linger among these obscurer weavers would be delectable pastime for the leisurely, and for the enthusiast. But we are all more or less in a hurry, and incline toward a courier who will point out the important spots without having to hunt for them. Artois had not only Arras; Flanders had not only Brussels; France had not only the State ateliers of Paris and Beauvais; but all these countries had smaller centres of production. The tapestries from some of these we are able to identify, even to weave a little history about them. These products are recognisable through much study of marks and details and much digging in learned foreign books, where careful records are kept—a congenial business for the antiquary.

But even though we may neglect in the main the lesser factories, there is one great development which must have full notice. It is the important English venture known as Mortlake.

Sully, standing at the elbow of Henri IV of France, called James I of England the wisest fool in Europe. A part of his wisdom was the encouraging in his own kingdom the royal craft of tapestry-making. To this end he followed the example set by that grand Henri of Navarre, and gave the crown's aid to establish and maintain works for tapestry production.

The elegance of the Stuart came to the front, desiring gratification; but craftiness had a hand in the matter, too. After the introduction of Italian luxury into England by Henry VIII, and the continuance of art's revival through the brilliant period of Elizabeth, it is not supposable that no tapestry looms existed throughout the length and breadth of the land at the time that James came down from Scotland.

They were there; documents prove it. But they were not of such condition as pleased the fastidious son of Marie Stuart, who needs must import his weavers and his artists. And therein was shown his craftiness, for he had coaxed secretly from Flanders fifty expert weavers before the canny Dutch knew their talented material was thus being filched away. Every weaver was bound to secrecy, lest the Low Countries, knowing the value of her clever workmen, put a ban upon their going before the English king had his full quota for the new venture.

Wandering about old London, one can identify now the place where the king's factory had habitat. The buildings stood where now we find Queen's Court Passage, and near by, at Victoria Terrace, was the house set aside for the limners or artists who drew and painted for the works.

To copy Henri IV in his success was dominant in the mind of James I. To the able Sir Francis Crane he gave the place of director of the works, and made with him a contract similar to that made with François de la Planche and Marc Comans in Paris by their king.

If to James I is owed the initial establishment, to Crane is owed all else at that time. It was in 1619 that the works were founded and Sir Francis took charge. He was a gentleman born, was much seen at Court, had ambitions of his own, too, and was cultivated in many ways of mind and taste. Besides all this, he had a head for business and an enthusiasm rampant, which could meet any discouragement—and needed this faculty later, too.

The king then gave him the management of the venture, started him with the royal favour, which was as good as a fortune, with a building for the looms, with imported workers who knew the tricks of the trade, and with a pretty sum of money to boot.

Prudence was born with the enterprise; so the men from the Low Countries were advised to become naturalised to make them more likely to stay, and to bring other workers over, Walloons, malcontents, religious fugitives, or whatever, so long as the hands were skilful. Down in Kent, they say those cottages were built for weavers,—those lovable nests of big timbers, curved gables and small leaded panes which we are so keen to restore and live in these days.

To swell the number of workers, and to have an eye for the future, there must be apprentices. The king looked about among the city's "hospitals" and saw many goodly boys living at crown expense, with no specified occupation during their adolescence. These he put as apprentices, for a term of seven years, to work under the fifty Flemish leaders. They were happy if they fell under the care of Philip de Maecht, he of Flanders, who had wandered down to Paris and served under De la Planche and Comans, and now had been enticed to the new Mortlake. He has left his visible mark on tapestries of his production—his monogram, P.D.M. (Plate facing page 70.)

A designer for the factory, one who lived there, was an inseparable part of it. And thus it came that Francis Clein (or Cleyn) was permanently established. He came from Denmark, but had taken an enlightening journey to Italy, and had a fine equipment for the work, which he carried on until 1658. His name is on several tapestries now existing.

Even kings tire of their fulfilled wishes. James wanted royal tapestry works, yet, when they were an established fact, he wearied of the drafts on his purse for their support. It was the old story of unfulfilled obligations, of a royal purse plucked at by too many vital interests to spend freely on art.

And Sir Francis Crane bore the brunt of the troubles. Contracts with the king counted but lightly in face of his enthusiasm. He continued the work, paid his men the best he could, and let the king's debt to him stand unsued.

In a few years—a very few, as it was then but 1623—he was obliged to petition the king. His private fortune was gone by the board, the workmen were clamouring for wages past due, and the factory trembled.

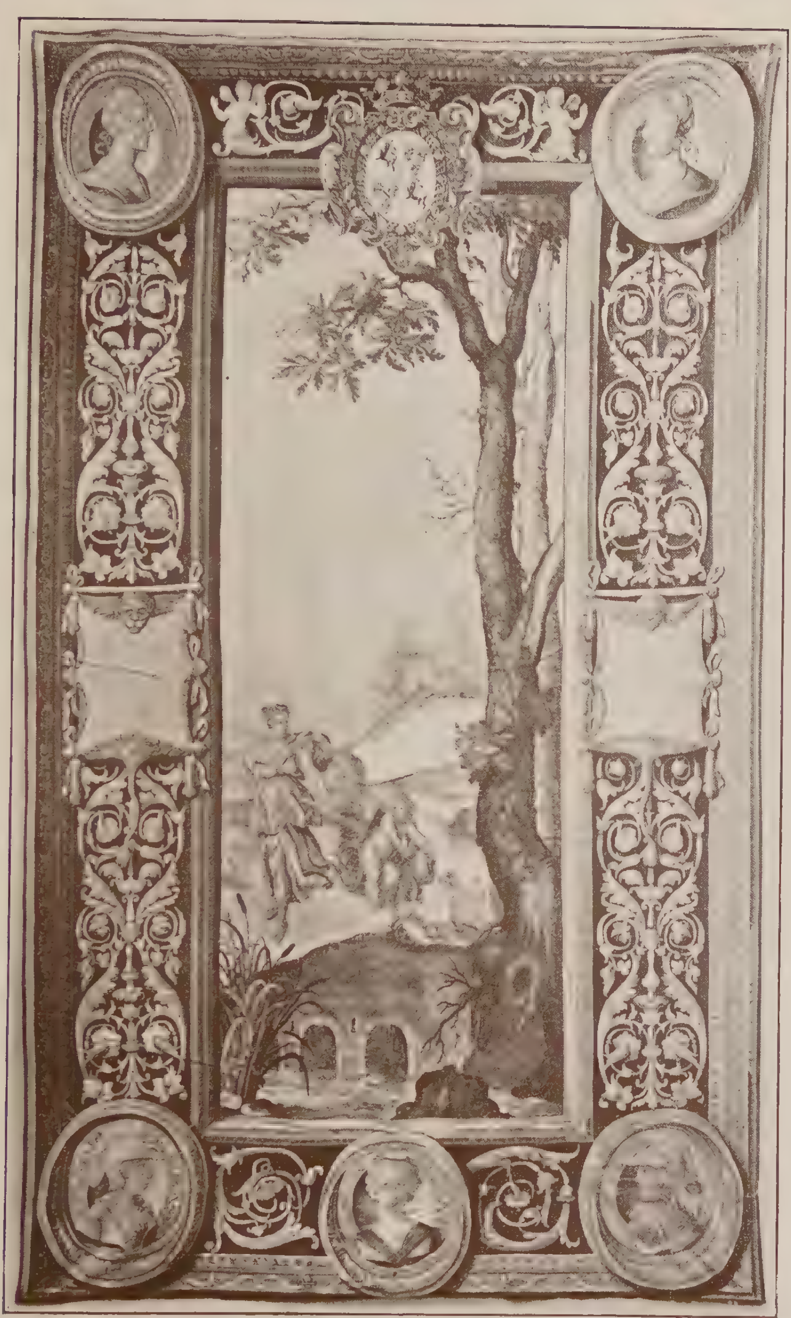
Then it was the Prince of Wales showed the value of his interest in the tapestries that were demonstrating the artistic enterprise of England. The Italian taste was the ultimate note in England as well as elsewhere—the Italy of the Renaissance; and from Italy the prince had ordered paintings and drawings. What was more to the purpose at this hour of leanness, he ordered paid by the crown a bill of seven hundred pounds, which covered their expense. The king, unwillingly,—for needs pressed on all sides—paid also Sir Francis Crane in part for moneys he had expended, but left him struggling against the hard conditions of a ruined private purse and a thin royal one.

At this juncture, 1625, James I died, and his son reigned in his stead. The Prince of Wales was now become that beribboned, picturesque, French-spirited monarch, whose figure on Whitehall eternally protests his tragic death.

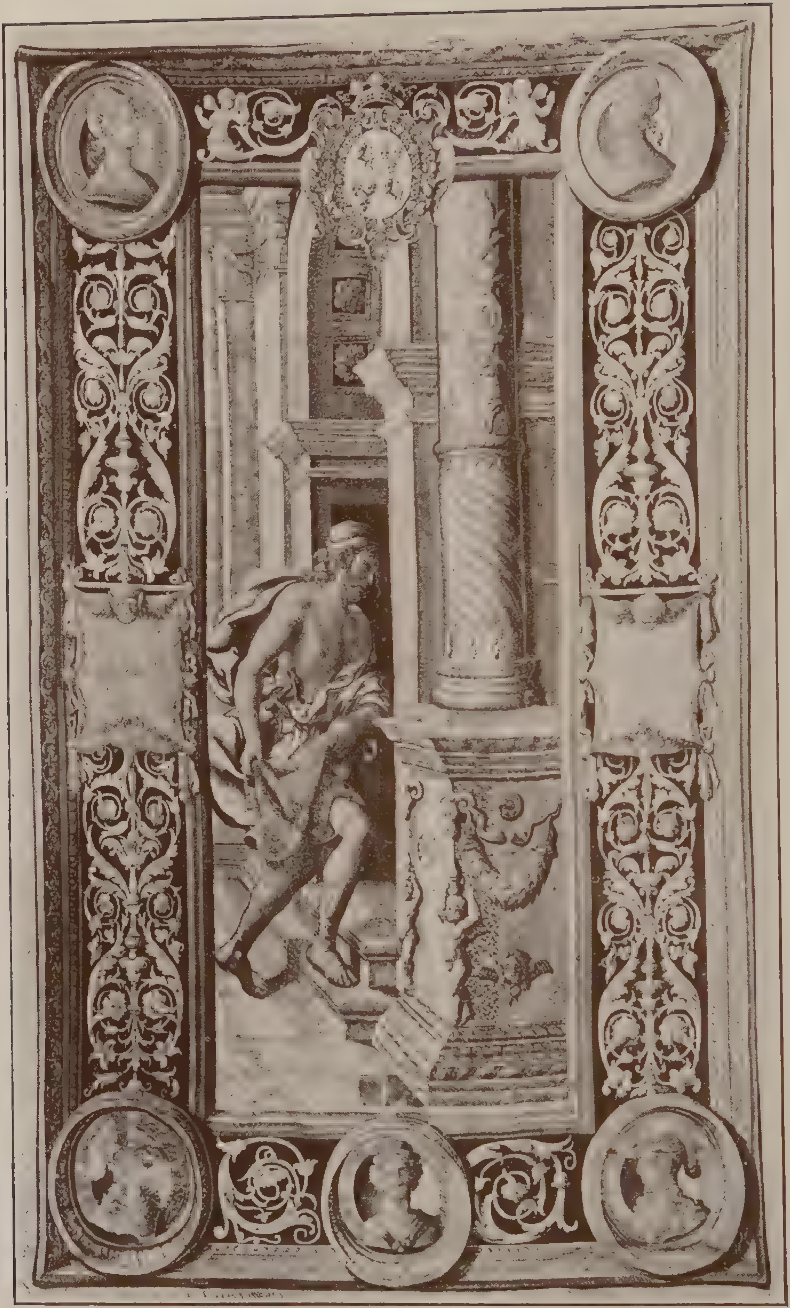
As Charles I, he had the power to foster the elegant industry which now grew and flowered to a degree that brought satisfaction then, and which yields a harvest of delight in our own times. Sir Francis Crane was at last to get the reward of enthusiasm and fidelity. Too much reward, said the envious, who tried in all ways, fair and foul, to drive him from what was now a lucrative and conspicuous post. The money he had advanced the factory came back to him, and more also. Ever a well-known figure at court, he now even aspired to closer relations with royalty, and built a magnificent country home, which was large enough to accommodate a visiting court. He even persuaded the king to visit the Mortlake factory, that the royal presence might enhance the value of art in the occult way known only to the subjects of kings.

Debts from the crown were not always paid in clinking coin, but often in grants of land, and by these grants Sir Francis Crane became rich. But the prosperity of Crane was not worth our recording were it not that it evidenced the prosperity of Mortlake. From the death of James I in 1625 for a period of ten years, the factory flowered and fruited. Its productions were of the very finest that have ever been produced in any country.

The reasons for this superiority were evident. First of all, Mortlake was the pet of the king; next, Crane was an able and devoted minister of its affairs; its artistic inspiration came from the home of the highest art—Italy—and its weavers were from that locality of sage and able weavers—Flanders. Add to this, tapestries were the fashion. Every man of wealth and importance felt them a necessary chattel to his elegance. And add to this, too, that Mortlake had almost a clean field. It was nearly without rival in fine tapestry-making at that time. Brus-



VULCAN AND VENUS SERIES. MORTLAKE
Collection of Philip Hiss, Esq., New York



VULCAN AND VENUS SERIES. MORTLAKE
Collection of Philip Hiss, Esq., New York

sels had declined, and the Gobelins was not formed in its inspired combination.

Besides this, were not the materials for the industry found best within the confines of the kingdom? What sheep in all the world produced such even, lustrous wool as the muttons huddling or wandering on the undulating *prés salés* of Kent; and was not wool, par excellence, the ideal material for picture-weaving, better than silk or glittering gold?

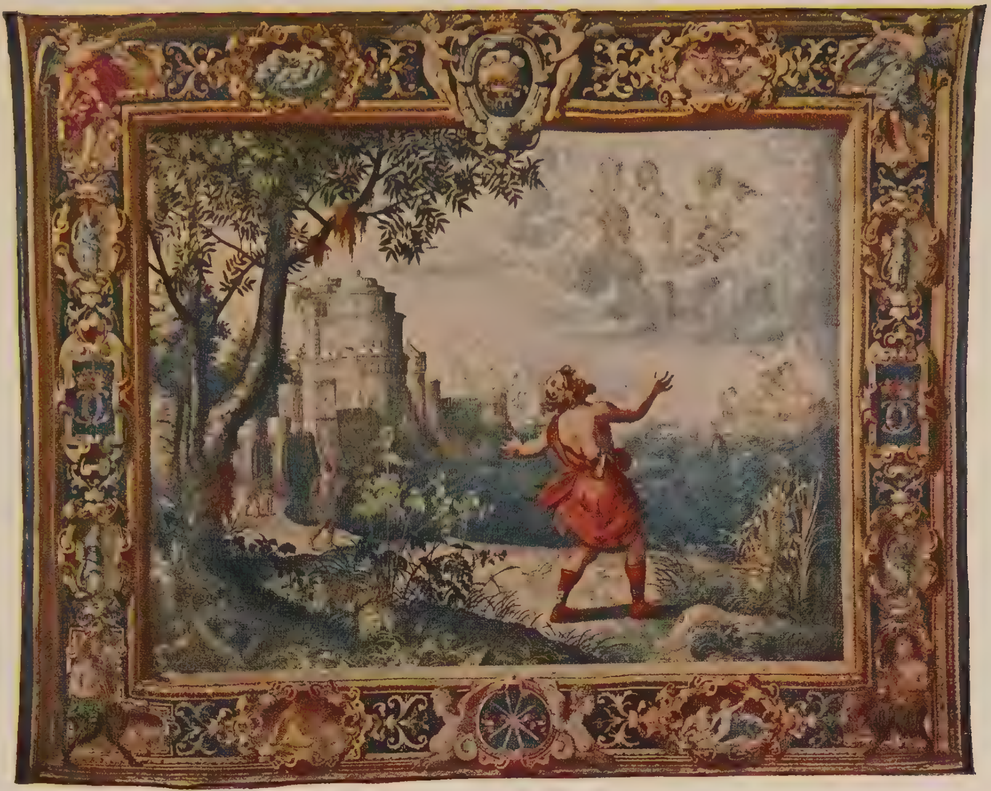
The hangings made then were superb. Thanks to destiny, we have some left on which to lavish our enthusiasm. The cartoons preferred came from Italy's great dead masters. First was Raphael. The Mortlake would try its hand at nothing less than the great series made to finish and soften the decoration of the Sistine Chapel. And so the *Acts of the Apostles* were woven, and in such manner as was worthy of them. They can be seen now in the Garde Meuble. Van Dyck, the great Hollander, made court painter to the king, drew borders for them, and was proud to do it, too. Van Dyck's other work here was a portrait of Sir Francis Crane and one of himself.

Rubens likewise associated his great decorative genius with the factory and gave to it his suite of six designs for the *Story of Achilles.* Cleyn, the Mortlake art-director, furnished a *History of Hero and Leander,* which found home among the marvellous tapestries of the King of Sweden.

There were other classic subjects, and the months as well, but of especial interest to us is the *Story of Vulcan.* Several pieces of this series have been lent to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, by their owners, Mrs. von Zedlitz, and Philip Hiss, Esq. Thus, without going far from home, thousands have been able to see these delightful examples of the highest period of England's tapestry production. The series was woven for Charles I when he was Prince of Wales, from cartoons by Francis Cleyn, and woven by the master, Philip de Maecht. The borders are especially interesting, and carry the emblematic three feathers of the prince, as well as his monogram, in Mrs. von Zedlitz's example, *The Expulsion of Vulcan.* (Colored plate facing page 170.)

It was this same series of *Vulcan* that was used as a text by Crane's enemy to prove to the king, in 1630, that Crane was profiting unduly and dishonestly from the land grants given him in payment for arrears. The plaintiff speaks of this set as being "the foundation of all good tapestries in England." We are fortunate in having pieces from it in America.

Only by actual contact with the tapestry itself can the beauty of the colour and the work be known. We well believe the superior quality of the English wool when it lies before us in smooth expanse of subtle colour. And as for even weaving, it is there unsurpassed. Every inch declares the talent and patience of the craftsman. As for colour, it is on a low scale that makes blues seem like remembrance of the sea, and reds like faint flushings planned in warm contrast, while over all is thrown a veil of delicate mist that may be of years, or may have been done with intent, but is there to give poetic value to the whole of the artist's scheme.



THE EXPULSION OF VULCAN FROM OLYMPUS

Sir Francis Crane died in 1636, and Captain Richard Crane succeeded him. And then began the decline of a factory which should have lived to save us deep regret. This second Crane could not carry on the work, and besought the king to relieve him by taking over the factory, which was thenceforth known as King's Works.

But civil wars came on in 1642 and other matters were more urgent than the production of works of art. So evil days fell upon the weavers.

Then came the black day when Charles was beheaded. The Commonwealth, to do it justice, tried to keep alive the industry. They put at its head a nobleman, Sir Gilbert Pickering, and, to inspire the workers, brought a new model for design.

They went to Hampton Court and took from there *The Triumph of Cæsar,* by Mantegna, to serve as new models. Some hope, too, lay in the weavers of the hour, clever Hollanders taken prisoners in the war; and all this while Cleyn directed.

But there were too many circumstances in the way, too many hard knocks of fate. People were too poor to buy good tapestries, and loose-woven, cheaper ones were heavily imported—to the amount of $500,000 yearly—from France and the Low Countries. Anti-Catholic feeling displayed hatred toward the able Catholic weavers, who were forced out of the country by proclamation.

The sad end of this story is that in 1702 a petition was placed before the king asking permission to discontinue the Mortlake works. It was granted in 1703, and thus ended the English royal venture in England.

CHAPTER XVIII

IDENTIFICATIONS

IDENTIFYING tapestries is like playing a game, like the solving of a piquant problem, like pursuing the elusive snark. I know of no keener pleasure than that of standing before a tapestry for the first time and giving its name and history from one's own knowledge, and not from a museum catalogue or a friend's recital. The latter sources of information may be faulty, but your own you can trust, for by delightful association with tapestries and their literature you have become expert. The catalogue is to be read, the friend is to be heard, in all humility, because these supply points that one may not know; but, who shall not say that an intensely human gratification is experienced when the owner of a tapestry with the Brussels mark tells you that it is a Gobelins, or one with the *History of Alexander* tells you it is the only set of that series ever woven, and you know better.

The first thing that strikes the eye and the intelligence is the drawing, the general school to which it belongs. There is matter for placing the piece in its right class. It might be said to place it in its right century or quarter century, but that tapestries were so often repeated in later times, the cartoon having no copyright and therefore open to all countries in all centuries. Next, then, to fix it better, comes a study of the border, for therein lies many a secret of identity, and borders were of the epoch in which the weaving was done, even though the cartoon for the centre came from an earlier time.

Last, as a finishing touch, come the marks in the galloon. This is put last because so often they are absent, and so often unknown, the sign of some ancient weaver lost in the mists of years, although a well-known mark so instantly identifies, that study of other details is secondary.

But under these three generalising heads comes all the knowledge of the savant, for the truth about tapestries is most elusive. Knowledge is to be gained only by a lover of the objects, a lover willing to spend long hours in association with his love, prowling among collections, comparing, handling, studying designs, discerning colours, searching for details, and indulging withal a nice feeling for textures, a vision that feels them even without touch of the hand.

If the study of design has not given a keen scent for the vague quality which we call "feeling," the eye would better be trained still further, for herein lies the secret of success in difficult places, and not only that, but if he have not this sense he is deprived of one of the most subtile thrills that the arts can excite.

But this sense is not a matter of untrained intuition. It is the flower of erudition, the flame from a full heart, or whatever dainty thing you choose to call it. It has its origin primarily in keen observation of the various important schools of design that have interested the world for centuries. We unconsciously augment it even in following the side-path of history in this modest volume.

Our studies here are but those of a summer morn or a winter eve, yet they are in vain if they have not set up a measuring standard or two within the mind.

GOTHIC DRAWING

First, and dearest to the lover of designs, comes the Gothic, the style practised by those conscientious romantic children-in-art, the Primitives. Their characteristics in tapestry are much the same as in painting, as in sculpture; for, weavers, painters, book-makers, sculptors, were all expressing the same matter, all following the same fashion. Therefore, to one's help comes any and every work of the primitive artists. Making allowance for the difference in medium, the same religious feeling is seen in the Burgundian set of *The Sacraments* in the Metropolitan Museum of Arts, New York, as is found in stone carving of the time which decorated churches and tombs.

The figures in the Gothic tapestries show a dignified restraint, a solemnity of pose, recalling the deadly seriousness with which children play the game of grown-ups. The artists of that day had to keep to their traditions; to express without over-expression, was their difficult task (as it is ours), but they had behind them the rigidity of the Byzantine and Early Christian, so that every free line, every vigorous pose or energetic action, was forging ahead into a new country, a voyage of adventure for the daring artist. Quite another affair was this from modern restraint which consists in pruning down the voluptuous lines following the too high Renaissance.

Faces are serious, but not animated. Dress reveals charming matter concerning stuffs and modes in that far time. But apart from these characteristics is the one great feature of the arrangement of the figures, almost without perspective. And therein lies one immense superiority of the ancient designs of tapestries over the modern as pure decorative fabric. Men and women are placed with their accessories of furniture or architecture all in the foreground, and each man has as many cubits to his stature as his neighbour, not being dwarfed for perspective, but only for modesty, as in the case of the Lady's companion in the *Unicorn* series—but that series is of a later Gothic time than the early works of Arras.

A noticeable feature is that the centre of vision is placed high on the tapestry. The eye must look to the top to find all the strength of the design. The lower part is covered with the sweeping robes or finished figures of the folk who are playing their silent parts for the delight of the eye. This covers well the space with large and simple motive. No recourse is had to such artifice as distant lands seen in perspective, nor angles of rooms, but all is flat, brought frankly into intimate association with the room that is lived in, so that these people of other days seem really to enter into our very presence, to thrust vitally their quaint selves into our company. This feature of simple flatness is in so great contrast to later methods of drawing that one becomes keenly conscious of it, and deeply satisfied with its beauty. The purpose of decoration and of furnishing seems to be most adequately met when the attention is retained within the chamber and not led out of it by trick of background nor lure of perspective, no matter how enticing are the distant landscapes or how noble the far palace of royalty. Thus the Primitives struck a more intimately human note than the artists of later and more sophisticated times.

The more archaic the tapestry, the simpler the motive, is the rule. The early weavers of Arras and of France were telling stories as naturally as possible, perhaps because the ways of their times were simple, and brushed aside all filigree with a directness almost brutal; but also, perhaps, because technique was not highly developed, either in him who drew with a pencil or him who copied that drawing in threads of silk and wool and gold. Whatever the cause, we can but rejoice at the result, which, alas, is shown to us by but lamentably few remnants outside of museums. These very archaic simple pieces are, for the most part, work of the latter part of the Fourteenth Century and the first part of the Fifteenth, and as the history of tapestry shows, were almost invariably woven in France or in Flanders. At the end of the time mentioned, designs, while retaining much the same characteristics already described, became more ambitious, more complicated, and introduced many scenes into one piece. This is easily proved by a comparison of the illustration of *The Baillée des Roses,* or *The Sacraments,* with *The Sack of Jerusalem,* all in the Metropolitan Museum.

The idea in the earliest Gothic cartoons—if the word may be allowed here, was to make a single picture, a unified group. Into the later cartoons came the fashion of multiplying these groups on one field, so that a tapestry had many points of interest, many scenes where tragedies or comedies were being enacted. Ingenious were the ways of the early artist to accomplish the separation between the various scenes, which were sometimes divided merely by their own attitudes, as folk dispose themselves in groups in a large drawing-room; and sometimes were divided by natural obstructions, like brooks and trees, or by columns.

Later yet, all the antique eccentricities passed away, and the laws of perspective and balance were fully developed in an art which has an unspeakable charm. All the things that modern art has decreed as crude or childish has passed away, and the sweet flower of the Gothic perfection unfolded its exquisite beauty. This Gothic perfection was the Golden Age of tapestry.

ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL

The use of architecture in the old Gothic designs makes a pleasing necessity of fastening our attention upon it. In the very oldest drawing the sole use is to separate one scene from another, in the same hanging. For this purpose slender columns are used. It is intensely interesting to note that these are the same variety of column that meets us on every delightful prowl among old relics of North Europe, relics of the days when man's highest and holiest energy expressed itself at last in the cathedral. Those slender stems of the northern Gothic are verily the stems of plants or of aspiring young trees, strong when grouped, dainty when alone, and forming a refined division for the various scenes in a picture. It must be confessed that in the medium of aged wool they sometimes totter with the effect of imminent fall, but that they do not fall, only inspires the illusion that they belong to the marvellous age of fairy-tale and fancy.

The careful observer takes a keen look at these columns as a clue to dates. The shape of the shaft, whether round or hectagonal, the ornament on the capitals, are indications. It is not easy to know how long after a design is adopted its use continues, but it is entirely a simple matter to know that a tapestry bearing a capital designed in 1500 could not have been made prior to that time.

The columns, later on, took on a different character. They lifted slender shafts more ornamented. It is as though the restless men of Europe had come up from the South and had brought with them reminiscences of those tender models which shadowed the art of the Saracens, the art which flavoured so much the art of Southern Europe. The columns of many a cloister in Italy bear just such lines of ornament, including the time when the brothers Cosmati were illuminating the pattern with their rich mosaic.

Then, later still, the columns burst into the exquisite bloom of the early Renaissance, their character profoundly different, but their use the same, that of dividing scenes from one another on the same woven picture. But as any allusion to the Renaissance seems to thrust us far out onto a radiant plain, let us scamper back into the mysterious wood of the Gothic and pick up a few more of its indicative pebbles, even as did Hans and Gretel of fairyland.

A use of Gothic architectural detail gives a religious look to tapestry, quite other than the later introduction of castles. These castle strongholds of the Middle Ages wasted no daintiness of construction, nor favoured light ornament, nor dainty hand. They were, par excellence, places of defence against the frequent enemy; so, in bastion and tower they were piled in curving masses around the scenes of the later Gothic tapestries. Even more, they began to play an important part in the *mise en scène,* and were drawn on tiny scale as habitations of the actors in the play who thrust heads from windows no larger than their throats, or who gathered in gigantic groups on disproportioned tessellated roofs.

Occasionally a lovely lady in distress is seen in fine raiment praying high Heaven for deliverance from the top of a feudal pile not half as high as her stately figure. Laws of proportion are quite lost in this naïve way of telling a story, and one wonders whether the wise old artist of other times, with his rigid solemnity was heroically overcoming difficulties of traditional technique, or whether he was smiling at the infantile taste of his wealthy patrons. The past fashion in history was to record only the lives and expressions of those great in power. The artist is ever the servant of such, but may he not have had his own private thoughts, unpurchaseable, unsold, and therefore only for our divining. There must have been a sense of humour then as now. and twinkling eyes with which to see it.

GOTHIC FLOWERS

Always, in studying a Gothic tapestry, we find flowers. The flowers of nature, they are, a simple nature at that, and never to be thought of in the same day as the gorgeous, expansive, proud flowers of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century decoration. Those splendid later blossoms flaunt their richness with assured swagger and demand of man his homage, quite forgetting it is the flower's best part to give.

Botticelli had not outgrown the Gothic flowers when he sprinkled them on the ambient air and floating robe of his chaste and dreamy *Venus,* nor when he set them about the elastic tripping feet of the *Spring.* He knew their simple power, and so do we. Scarce a Gothic tapestry is complete without them, happily for those bent on identification, for rarely can one discover them without the same thrill that accompanies the discovery of the first violets and snowdrops in the awakening woods.

The old weavers set them low in the picture, used them as space-fillers wherever space lay happily before them, and they never exaggerated their size, a virtue of which the full Renaissance cannot boast. They are the simplest sort of flowers, the corolla of petals turning as frankly toward the observer as the sunflower turns toward her god, and little bells hanging as regularly as a chime. These are their characteristics, easily recognisable and expressing the unsophisticated charm of the creations of honest childish hands. Irrelevancy is theirs, too. They spring from stones or pavement as well as from turf or garden, and thus express the more ardently their love for man and for close association with him. When they are seen after this manner, it is sure that the early men have set them, just as Shakespeare, at the same epoch, set violets blue and daisies pied, cowslip, rosemary "for remembrance," and other familiar dainties, in the grim foundation stones of his tragedies.

A comparison of the different hangings available to the amateur, or of the pictured examples given in this book, will reveal more than can be well set down with the pen. The use of flowers in the set of *The Baillée des Roses* is exceptional, in that here the flowers form a harmonious decorative scheme and are at the same time an important part of the story which is pictured.

In other earliest examples they playfully peep within the limits of the hanging. Important use is, however, made of them in that altogether entrancing set of *The Lady and the Unicorn,* where they indicate the beauties of a fascinating park in which the delicate lady and her attendant led a wondrous life guarded by two beasts as fabulous as faithful, and the whole region of leaves and petals but serving as a paradise for delectable white rabbits and piquant monkeys. Could any modern indicate by sophistry of brush or brain so intoxicating a fairyland, so gracious a field of dear delights?

COSTUMES

A minute study of all the details of costume and accessories is one of the measuring sticks with which we count the years of a tapestry's life. This applies more particularly to the work prior to the Renaissance, to the time when all characters were dressed in the mode of the day —another evidence of that ingenuousness that delights us who have passed the period where it is possible.

As we have noted before, a costume cannot be used before its time, so, as much as anything can, the study of its details prevents us from going too far back with its date. When one has reached the point of identifying a Gothic tapestry to where the exact decade is questioned, the century having been ascertained, a careful study of costumes outside the region of tapestries is necessary. This leads one into a department all by itself and means delightful hours in libraries poring over illustrated books on costume. It means to learn in what manner our gods and heroes of fact and fancy habited themselves, how Berengaria wore her head-dress and Jehane de Bourgogne her brocades, and how the eternally various sleeve differed in its fashioning for both men and women.

Head-dresses were of such size and variety that they form a study in themselves, and dates have been fixed by these alone. The turban in its evolution is an interesting study, and makes one wonder if that, too, did not wander north from the Moorish occupancy of Spain and the wave of inspiration which flowed unceasingly from the Orient in the years when Europe created little without inspiration from outside.

A patriarchal bearded man in sacerdotal robes of costly elegance seriously impresses his fellows all through the Gothic tapestries, and his rival is a swaggering, important person, clean-shaven, in full brocaded skirt, furbound, whose attitude declares him royal or near it. The first of these is the model nowadays for stage kings, and even a woman's toilet must vaunt itself to get notice beside his gorgeous array. He wears about his waist a jewelled girdle of great splendour, and on his head some impressive matter of either jewels or draping. His face is usually full-bearded, but even when smooth, youth is not expressed upon him. Youths of the same time are more *débonnaire,* are springing about, clean-faced, clad in short, belted pelisse, showing sprightly legs equally ready to step quickly towards a lovely lady or to a field of battle.

Soldiers—let a woman hesitate to speak of their dress and arms in any tone but that of self-depreciating humility. Suffice it to say that in the early work they wore the armour of the time, whether the scene depicted were an event of history cotemporaneous, or of the time of Moses. Fashions in dress changed with deliberation then, and it is to the arms carried by the men that we must sometimes look for exactness of date.

LETTERING

The presence of letters is often noticed in hangings of the Fourteenth, Fifteenth and early Sixteenth Centuries. It was a fashion eminently satisfactory, a great assistance to the observer. It helped tell the story, and, as these old pictures had always a story to tell, it was entirely excusable—at least, so it seems to one who has stood confounded before a modern painting without a catalogue or other indication as to the why of certain agitated figures.

The lettering was, in the older Gothic, explicit and unstinted, in double or quadruple lines, in which case it counts as decoration banded across top or bottom. Again, it is as trifling as a word or two affixed to the persons of the play to designate them. This lettering may be French or Latin.

EARLY BACKGROUNDS

Backgrounds of the early Fifteenth Century deal much in conventionalised, flat patterns, but fifty or sixty years later, when figures began to be more crowded, there was but little space left unoccupied by the participants in the allegory, and this was filled by the artifices of architecture or herbage that formed the divisions into the various scenes. Later the designing artists decided to let into the picture the light of distant fields and skies, and thus was introduced the suggestion of space outside the limit of the canvas.

LATER DRAWING

After the Gothic drawing, came the avalanche of the Renaissance. That altered all. The Italian taste took precedence, and from that time on the cartoons of tapestries represent modern art, trailing through its various fashions or modes of the hour. The purest Renaissance is direct from the Italian artist, in tapestry as well as in painting, but it is interesting to see the maladroitness of the Flemish hand when left to draw cartoons for himself after the new manner.

After the Renaissance came exaggeration and lack of sincerity; then the improvement of the Seventeenth Century, notably in France, and after that the dainty fancies of the Eighteenth Century, and here we are dealing with art so modern that it needs no elucidation. The drawing in tapestries is a subject as fascinating as it is inexhaustible, but, however much one may read on it, nothing equals actual association with as many tapestries as are available, for the eye must be trained by vision and not by intellectual process alone.

CHAPTER XIX

IDENTIFICATIONS (*Continued*)

IF the amateur can have the fortune to see in the same hour a tapestry of the early Fifteenth Century, and one a hundred years later, and then one about 1550, from Brussels, drawn by an Italian artist, he has before him an exposition of tapestry weaving in its golden age when it sweeps through its greatest periods and phases to marvellous perfection. The earliest example gives acquaintance with that almost fabled time of the Gothic primitives in art; the second shows the highest development of that art under the influence of civilisation, and the third shows the obsession of the new art of the Renaissance. It is, perhaps, superfluous to say that after the revival of classic art the power of producing spontaneous Gothic was lost forever. From that time on, every drawing has had certain characteristics, certain sophistications that the artist cannot escape except in a deliberate copy.

Modern art, we call it. In tapestry it began with a freedom of drawing in figures, and an adoption of classic ornament and architecture. In this connexion it is interesting to note the introduction of Greek or Roman detail in the columns that divide the scenes, to see saints gathered by temples of classic form instead of Gothic. If Renaissance details appear in a hanging called Gothic, it is easy to see that the piece was woven after Europe was infected with modern art, and this is an assistance in placing dates; at least, it checks the tendency to slip back too far in antiquity, a tendency of which we in a new country are entirely guilty.

Lest too long a lingering on the subject of design become wearisome, a mention of later designs is made briefly. The simplicity of the early Renaissance, the perfection of the high Renaissance, are both shown in tapestry as well as in paintings, and so, too, is exemplified the inflation that ended in tiresome exuberance.

After the fruit was ripe it fell into decay. After Sixteenth Century perfection, Seventeenth Century designs fell of their own overweight, figures were too exaggerated, draperies billowed out as in a perpetual gale, architecture and landscapes were too important, and tapestries became frankly pictures to attract the attention. To this class of design belong all those monstrosities which reflected and distorted the art of Raphael, and which have been intimately associated with Scriptural subjects down to our own times.

After Raphael, Rubens. Familiarity with this heroic painter is the key to placing all the magnificent designs similar to the set of *Antony and Cleopatra* (Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York).

Then came the easily recognisable designs of the French ateliers of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. These are so frequently brought before us as to seem almost like products of our own day. The earlier ones seem (as ever) the purer art, the less sensual, appealing to the more impersonal side of man, dealing in battles and in classic subjects. Later, the drawings, becoming more directly personal, in the time of Louis XIV portrayed events in the *Life of the King;* in the next reign, slipping into the pleasures of the *Royal Hunts,* from which the descent was easy into depicting nothing higher than the soft loveliness of the fantastic life of the time as led by those of high estate. From Lebrun to Watteau one can trace the gradual seductive decline, where heroic ideal lowers softly in alluring decadence into a mere tickling of the senses. And at this time the productions of great tapestries stopped.

Before leaving the review of drawing or design, it is well to recall that the fleeting fashions of the day usually set the models, not in the manner of treatment which we have been considering broadly, but in the subject of designs. For example, the tendency to religious and morality subjects in the Gothic, the love for Greek gods and heroes in the Renaissance, the glorification of kings and warriors at all times, and the portrayal of royal pleasures in modern times. The months of the year were woven in innumerable designs and formed an endless theme for artists' ingenuity during and after the Renaissance.

BORDERS

It is but natural that, with the expansion in drawing, the freedom given the pencil, imagination leaped outside the pictured scene and worked fantastically on the border, and it is to the border that we turn for many a mark of identification. The subject being a full one, it has longer consideration in a separate chapter. First there is the simple outlying tape, then the designed border. The early Gothic was but a narrow line of flowers and berries; the later more sophisticated Gothic enlarged and elaborated this same motive without introducing another. The blossoms grew larger, the fruit fuller and the modest cluster of berries was crowded by pears, apples and larger fruit, until a general air of full luxury was given. The design was at first kept neatly within bordering lines of tape, but later, overleaped them with a flaunting leaf or mutinous flower.

Ribbons appeared early, then came fragmentary glimpses of dainty columns which gave nice reasons for the erect upstanding of so heavy a decoration. These all were Gothic, but what came after shows the riotous imagination of the Renaissance. It seemed in that fruitful time, space itself were not large enough to hold the designs within the artist's brain. Certainly no corner of a tapestry could be left unfilled, and not that alone, but filled with perfect pictures instead of with a simple repeated scheme of decoration. It was in this rich time of production that the borders of tapestries grew to exceeding width, and were divided into squares, each square containing a scene. These scenes were often of sufficient importance in composition to serve as models for the centre of a tapestry, each one of them, which thought gives a little idea of the fertility of the artists in that untired period.

It was the delight of the great Raphael himself to expend his talent on the border of his cartoons. From this artist others took their cue with varying skill, but with fine effect, and with unlimited interest to us. Those who run have time to remark only the great central picture in a hanging; but, to those who live with it, this added line of exquisite panorama is an unceasing delight for the contemplative hours of solitude. From this rich departure from Gothic simplicity the artists grew into the same fulness of design that ended in decadence. The border became almost obnoxious in its inflated importance and from voluptuous elegance changed to coarse overweight; and by these signs we know the early inspired work from its rank and monstrous aftergrowth in the Eighteenth Century.

A quick glance at the plates showing the work of tapestry's next highwater mark, the hundred years of the Gobelins' best work, illustrates the difference between that time and others, and shows also the gradual drop into the border which is merely a woven representation of a gilded wood frame to enclose the woven picture as a painted one would be framed. The plate of *Esther and Ahasuerus* illustrates this sort of border in the unmistakable lines of Louis XV ornament.

POINT OF INTEREST

Allusion has been made to the placing of the point of interest in a tapestry, but this is a matter to be studied by much exercise of the eye. Perhaps the amateur knows already much about it, an unconscious knowledge, and needs only to be directed to his own store of observations. As much as anything this change of design depended on the uses the varying civilisation made of the hangings. So much interest lies in this that I find myself ever prone to recapitulate the very human facts of the past; the lining of rude stone walls and the forming of interior doors, which was the office of the early tapestries, and the loose full draping of the same; then the gradual increase of luxury in the finish of dwellings themselves, until tapestries were a decoration only; and then the minimising of grandeur under Louis XV when everything fell into miniature and tapestries were demanded only in small pieces that could be applied to screens or chairs—a prostitution of art to the royal demand for prettiness.

Keeping these general ideas of the uses of tapestries in mind, it is easy to reason out the course of the point of interest in the design. The Gothic aim was to make warm and comfortable the austere apartment; the Renaissance sought to produce big decorative pictures to hang in place of frescoes; and the French idea—beginning with that same ideal—fell at last into the production of something that should accompany the other arts in making minutely ornate the home of man. Therefore, the Gothic artist placed the point of interest high; the artists of the Renaissance followed the rules of modern painting (even to the point of becoming academic); and the last good period of the Gobelins dropped into miniature and decoration.

COLOURS

Colours we have not yet considered, in this chapter of review for identification's sake. They follow the same line, have the same history, and this makes the beauty, the logic and the consistency of our work, the work of tracing to their source the products of other men and other times.

Colours in the early Gothic—of what do they remind one so strongly as of the marvels of old stained glass, that rich, pure kaleidoscope which has lived so long in the atmosphere of incense ascending from censer and from heart. The same scale, rich and simple, unafraid of unshaded colour, characterise both glass and tapestry.

The dyeing of colours in those days was a religion, a religion that believed in holding fast to the forefathers' tenets. Red was known to be a goodly colour, and blue an honest one; yellow was to conjure with, and brown to shade; but beyond twelve or perhaps twenty colours, the dyer never ventured. To these he gave the hours of his life, with these he subjugated the white of Kentish wool, and gave it honest and soft into the hand of the artist-weaver who, we must add, should have been thankful for this brief gamut. To say the least, we of to-day are grateful, for to this we owe the effect of cathedral glass seen in old tapestries like that of *The Sacraments*. The Renaissance having more sophisticated tales to tell, a higher intellectual development to portray, demanded a longer scale of colour, so more were introduced to paint in wool the pictures of the artists. At first we see them pure and true, then muddy, uncertain, until a dull confusion comes, and the hanging is depressing. When, at the last, it came that a tapestry was but a painting in wool, with as many thousand differently united threads as would reproduce the shading of brush-blended paint, the whole thing fell of its own weight, and we of to-day value less the unlimited pains of the elaborate dyer and weaver than we do the simpler work. The reason is plain. Time fades a little even the securest dyes, and that little is just enough to reduce to flat monotones a work in which perhaps sixty thousand tones are set in subtle shading.

HAUTE LISSE

The worker on tapestries, the modern restorer—to whom be much honour—finds a sign of identification in the handling of old tapestries that is scarcely within the province of the amateur, but is worth mentioning. It is the black tracing on the warp with which high-warp weavers assist their work of copying the artist's cartoon. Where this is present, the work is of the prized haute lisse or high-warp manufacture, instead of the basse lisse or low-warp. But the latter is not to be spoken of disparagingly, for in the admirable time of French production about the time of the formation of the Gobelins, low-warp work was almost as well executed as high-warp, and as much valued. Brussels made her fame by haute-lisse, but in France the low-warp was dubbed *"á la façon de Flandres";* and as Flanders stood for perfection, the weavers did their best to make the low-warp production approach in excellence the famed work of the ateliers to the north, which had formerly so prospered.

To find this black line is to establish the fact that the tapestry was woven on a high-warp loom, if nothing more. But that in itself means, as is explained in the chapter on looms and *modus operandi,* that a superior sort of weaver, an artist-artisan, did the work, and that he had enormous difficulties to overcome in his patient task.

A black outline woven in the fabric is one which artists prior to the Seventeenth Century used to give greater strength to figures. It was the habit thus to trace the entire human form, to lift it clearly from its background, after the "poster" manner of to-day. It is as though a dark pencil had outlined each figure. This practice stopped in later years, and is not seen at all in the softer methods of the Gobelins.

THE WEAVE

The materials of tapestries we know to be invariably wool, silk and metal threads, yet the weaving of these varies with the talent of the craftsman. The manner of the oldest weavers was to produce a fabric not too thick, flexible rather—for was it not meant to hang in folds?—and of an engagingly even surface. It was not too fine, yet had none of the looseness associated with the coarse, hurried work of later and degenerate times. It was more like the even fabric we associate with machine work, yet as unlike that as palpitating flesh is like a graven image. It was the logical production of honest workmen who counted time well spent if spent in taking pains.

This ability, to take detail as a religion, has left us the precious relics of the exquisite period immediately before the Italian artists had their way in Brussels. Notice the weave here. See the pattern of the fabrics worn by the personages of high estate. You could almost pluck it from the tapestry, shake out its folds, measure it flat, by the yard, and find its delicate, intelligent pattern neat and unbroken. Wonderful weaver, magic hands, infinite pains, were those to produce such an effect on our sated modern vision, all with a few threads of silk and wool and gold.

Then there is the human face—it takes an artist to describe the various faces with their beauty of modelling, their infinite variety of type, their subtlety of expression. You can almost see the flushing of the capillaries under the translucent skin, so fine are the mediums of silk and wool under the magic handling of the talented weavers in brilliant epochs. Not a detail in one of these older canvases of the highest Gothic development has been neglected.

The modern places his point of interest, and, knowing the observer's eye is to obediently linger there, he splashes the rest of his drawing into careless subserviency. But these careful older drawings showed in every inch of their execution a conscience that might put the Puritan to shame. Note, even, the ring that is being handed to the lady in the Mazarin tapestry of Mr. Morgan's (if yours is the happy chance to see it). It was not sufficient for the weaver that it be a ring, but it must be a ring set with a jewel, and that jewel must be the one celebrated ever for its value; so in the canvas glows a carefully rounded spot of pigeon-blood.

This exquisitely fine weaving of the period which trembled between the Gothic and the Renaissance made possible the execution of the later work—and yet, and yet, who shall say that the later is the superior work?

Vaunted as it is, one turns to it because one must, but with entire fidelity of heart for the preceding manner.

In the high period of Brussels production, when the Renaissance was well established there, through the cartoons of the Italian artists, it is interesting to note the richness given to surfaces solidly filled in with gold by throwing the thread in groups of four. The light is thus caught and reflected, almost as though from a heap of cut topaz. This characterises the tapestries of the *Mercury* series in the Blumenthal collection.

Naturally, the evenness of the weaving has much to do with the value of the piece—otherwise the pains of the old weavers would have been futile. The surface smooth, free from lumps or ridges, strong with the even strength of well-matched threads, this is the beauty that characterises the best work this side of the Fifteenth Century.

It is the especial prerogative of the merchant to touch with his own hands a great number of tapestries. It is by this handling of the fabric that he acquires a skill in determining the make of many a tapestry. There is an indefinable quality about certain wools, and about the manner of their weaving that is only revealed by the touch. Not all hands are wise to detect, but only those of the sympathetic lover of the materials they handle—and I have found many such among the merchant collector. But even he finds identification a task as difficult as it is interesting, and spends hours of thought and research before arriving at a conclusion—and even then will retract on new evidence.

COPIES

There are certain pitfalls into which one may so easily fall that they must never be out of mind. The worst of these, the pit which has the most engaging and innocent entrance, is that of the copy, the modern tapestry copied from the old a few decades ago.

It is easy to find by reference to the huge volumes of French writers on tapestry just when certain sets of cartoons were first woven. Take, for example, the *Acts of the Apostles* by Raphael; Brussels, 1519, is the authentic date. But after that the Mortlake factory in England wove a set, and others followed. This instance is too historic to be entirely typical, but there are others less known. It was the habit of factories that possessed a valuable set of cartoons to repeat the production of these in their own factory, and also to make some arrangement whereby other factories could also produce the same set of hangings.

In the evil days that fell upon Brussels after her apogee, copying her own works took the place of new matters. Also, in the French factories in their prime, the same set was repeated on the same looms and on different ones, vide *The Months, The Royal Residences, History of Alexander,* etc., and the gorgeous *Life of Marie de Medici.* If these notable examples were copied it is safe to conclude that many others were.

The study of marks is left for another chapter, for, by this time, even the enthusiast is wearying. There seems so much to learn in this matter of investigating and identifying, and, after all, everything is uncertain. One looks about at identified pieces in museums and private collections, even among the dealers, and the discouraging thought comes that other people can tell at a glance. But this is very far from being true.

Even the savant studies long and investigates much before he gives a positive classification of a piece that is not "pedigreed." Here is a Flemish piece, here is a French, he will declare, and for the life of you you cannot see the ear-marks that tell the ancestry. And so in all humility you ask, "How can you tell with a glance of the eye?" But he does not. No one can do that in every case. He must spend days at it, reflecting, reading, handling, if the piece is evidently one of value. He will show you, perhaps, as an honest dealer-collector showed me, a set of five fine pieces which he could not identify at all. "The weave," said he, "is Mortlake, the design in part German, these are Italian *putti*—yet when all is told, I put down the work as an Eighteenth Century copy of decadent Renaissance. But I am far from sure."

If a dealer, surrounded by experienced helpers, can thus be nonplussed, there is little cause for humiliation on the part of the amateur who hesitates. It is not expected that one can know at a glance whether a piece of work was executed in France, or in Flanders at a given epoch. But the more difficult the work of identification, the keener the zest of the hunt. It is then that one calls into requisition all the knowledge of art that the individual has been unconsciously accumulating all the years of his life. The applied arts reflect the art feeling of the age to which they belong, and the diluted influence of the great artists directs them. This is true of drawing and of colour.

History has ever its reflection on arts and crafts, but perhaps it has in tapestry its most intentional record. It is a forced and deliberate piece of egoism when a monarch or a conqueror has a huge picture drawn exhibiting his grandeur in battle or his elegance at home. In some hangings modesty limits to the border of an imaginary and decorative scene the monogram of the heroine of history for whose apartments the tapestry was woven. And so history is given a grace, a delicate meaning, a warm interest, which is one of the side-gardens of delight that show from the long path of identification study.

This little book has as its aim the gentle purpose of pointing the way to a knowledge that shall be a guide in knowing gold from—not from dross, that is too simple, but gold from gold-plating let us say, for the mad lover of tapestries will not admit that any hand-woven tapestry is on the low level of dross. Any work which human hands has touched and lingered on in execution is deserving of the respect of the modern whose life must of necessity be lived in hasty execution. Every chapter, then, is but a caution or a counsel, and this one but a briefer statement of the same matter. If onto the fringe of the main thought hangs much of history, it is history inseparable from it, for history of nations gives the history of great men, and these regulate the doings of all the lesser ones below them.

Identification, pure and simple, is for the rapt lover of art who pursues his game in museums and has his quiet delights that others little dream of. But in general, to the practical yet cultivated American, it is a means to expend wisely the derided dollars that we impress upon other nations to the artistic enrichment of our own country.

CHAPTER XX

BORDERS

IF the artists of tapestries had never drawn nor ever woven anything but the borders that frame them, we would have in that department alone sufficient matter for happy investigation and acutely refined pleasure. I even go so far as to think that in certain epochs the border is the whole matter, and the main design is but an enlargement of one of the many motives of which it is composed. But that is in one particularly rich era, and in good time we shall arrive at its joys.

First then—for the orderly mind grows stubborn and confused at any beginning that begins in the middle—we must hark back to the earliest tapestries. Tracing the growth of the border is a pleasant pastime, a game of history in which amorini, grotesques and nymphs are the personages, and garlands of flowers their perpetual accessories, but first comes the time when there were no borders, the Middle Ages.

There were none, according to modern parlance, but it was usual to edge each hanging with a tape of monotone, a woven galloon of quiet hue, which had two purposes; one, to finish neatly the work, as the housewife hems a napkin; the other, to provide space of simple material for hanging on rude hooks the big pictured surface.

This latter consideration was one of no small importance, as we can readily see by sending the thought back to the time when tapestries led a very different life (so human they seem in their association with men that the expression must be allowed) from that of to-day, when they are secured to stretchers, or lined, or even framed behind glass like an easel painting.

In those other times of romance and chivalry a great man's tapestries were always en route. Like their owner, they were continually going on long marches, nor were they allowed to rest long in one place. From the familiar castle walls they were taken down to line the next habitat of their owner, and that might be the castle of some other lord, or it might be the tent of an encampment. Again, it might be that an open-air exposition for a pageant, was the temporary use.

The tapestries thus bundled about, forever hung and unhung on hooks well or ill-spaced, handled roughly by unknowing varlets or dull soldiers, these tapestries suffered much, even to the point of dilapidation, and thus arose the need for a tape border, and thus it happens also that the relics of that time are found mainly among the religious pieces. These last found safe asylum within convent walls or in the sombre quiet of cathedral shades, and like all who dwell within such precincts were protected from contact with a rude world.

One day, sitting solitary at his wools, it occurred to the weaver of the early Fifteenth Century to spill some of his flowers out upon the dark galloon that edged his work. The effect was charming. He experimented further, went into the enchanted wood of such a design as that of

The Lady and the Unicorn to pluck more flowers, and of them wove a solid garland, symmetrical, strong, with which to frame the picture. To keep from confounding this with the airy bells and starry corollas of the tender inspiring blossoms of the work, he made them bolder, trained them to their service in solid symmetric mass, and edged the whole, both sides, with the accustomed two-inch line of solid rich maroon or blue.

It is easy to see the process of mind. For a long time there had been gropings, the feeling that some sort of border was needed, a division line between the world of reality and the world of fable. Examine the Arras work and see to what tricks the artist had recourse. The architectural resource of columns, for example; where he could do so, the artist decoyed one to the margin. Thus he slipped in a frame, and broke none of the canons of his art, and no more beautiful frame could have been devised, as we see by following up the development and use of the column. Once out from its position in the edge of the picture into its post in the border, it never stops in its beauty of growth until it reaches such perfection as is seen in the twisted and garlanded columns which flank the Rubens series, and those superb shafts in *The Royal Residences* of Lebrun at the Gobelins under Louis XIV.

The other trick of framing in his subject which was open to the Arras weaver whom we call Gothic, was to set verses, long lines of print in French or Latin at top or bottom.

But his first real legitimate border was made of the same flowers and leaves that made graceful the finials and capitals of Gothic carving. Small clustered fruit, like grapes or berries, came naturally mixed with these, as Nature herself gives both fruit and flowers upon the earth in one fair month.

Simplicity was the thing, and a continued turning to Nature, not as to a cult like a latter-day nature-student, but as a child to its mother, or a hart to the water brook. As even in a border, stayed between two lines of solid-coloured galloon, flowers and fruit do not stand forever upright without help, the weaver gave probability to his abundant mass by tying it here and there with a knot of ribbon and letting the ribbon flaunt itself as ribbons have ever done to the delight of the eye that loves a truant.

By this time—crawling over the top of the Fourteen Hundreds—the border had grown wider, had left its meagre allowance of three or four inches, and was fast acquiring a foot in width. This meant more detail, a broader design, coarser flowers, bigger fruit, and these spraying over the galloon, and all but invading the picture. It was all in the way of development. The simplicity of former times was lost, but design was groping for the great change, the change of the Renaissance.

The border tells quickly when it dawned, and when its light put out all candles like a glorious sun—not forgetting that some of those candles would better have been left burning. By this time Brussels was the centre of manufacture and the cartoonist had come to influence all weavings. Just as carpenters and masons, who were the planners and builders of our forefathers' homes, have now to submit to the domination of the *École des Beaux Arts* graduates, so the man at the loom came under the direction of Italian artists. And even the border was not left to the mind of the weaver, but was carefully and consistently planned by the artist to accompany his greater work, if greater it was.

Raphael himself set that fashion. He was a born decorator, and in laying out the borders of his tapestries unbridled his wonderful invention and let it produce as many harmonies as could be crowded into miniature. He set the fashion of dividing the border into as many sections as symmetry would allow, dividing them so daintily that the eye scarce notes the division, so purely is it of the intellect. In the border for the *Acts of the Apostles,* this style of treatment is the one he preferred. This set has no copy in America, but an almost unrivalled example of this style of border is in the private collection of George Blumenthal, Esq., the *Herse and Mercury.*[1] Here picture follows picture in charming succession, in that purity and perfection of design with which the early Renaissance delights us. The classic note set by the subject of the hanging is never forgotten, but on this key is played a varied harmony of line and colour. For dainty invention, this sort of border reaches a very high expression of art.

If Raphael set the fashion, others at least were not slow in seizing the new idea and from that time on, until a period much later—that of the Gobelins under Louis XV—it was the fashion to introduce great and distracting interest into the border. Even the little galloon became a twist of two ribbons around a repeated flower, or a small reciprocal pattern, so covetous was design of all plain spaces.

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[1] **Frontispiece.**

Lesser artists than Raphael also divided the border into squares and oblongs, and with charming effect. The sides were built up after the same fashion, but instead of the delicate architectural divisions he affected, partitions were made with massed fruit and flowers, vines and trellises. The scenes were surprisingly dramatic, Flemish artists showing a preference for such Biblical reminders as Samson with his head being shorn in Delilah's lap, while Philistines just beyond waited the enervating result of the barber's work; or, any of the loves and conflicts of the Greek myths was used.

The colouring—too much cannot be seen of the warm, delicate blendings. There is always the look of a flower-bed at dawn, before Chanticleer's second call has brought the sun to sharpen outlines, before dreams and night-mist have altogether quitted the place. Plenty of warm wood colours are there, of lake blues, of smothered reds. Precious they are to the eye, these scenes, but hard to find now except in bits which some dealer has preserved by framing in a screen or in the carved enclosure of some nut-wood chair.

For a time borders continued thus, all marked off without conscious effort, into countless delicious scenes. Then a change begins. After perfection, must come something less until the wave rises again. If in Raphael's time the border claimed a two-foot strip for its imaginings, it was slow in coming narrower again, and need required that it be filled. But here is where the variance lay: Raphael had so much to say that he begged space in which to portray it; his imitators had so much space to fill that their heavy imagination bungled clumsily in the effort. They filled it, then, with a heterogeneous mass of foliage, fruit and flowers, trained occasionally to make a bower for a woman, a stand for a warrior, but all out of scale, never keeping to any standard, and lost absolutely in unintelligent confusion.

The Flemings in their decadence did this, and the Italians in the Seventeenth Century did more, they introduced all manner of cartouche. The cartouche plays an important part in the boasting of great families and the sycophancy of those who cater to men of high estate, for it served as a field whereon to blazon the arms of the patron, who doubtless felt as man has from all time, that he must indeed be great whose symbols or initials are permanently affixed to art or architecture. The cartouche came to divide the border into medallions, to apportion space for the various motives; but with a far less subtle art than that of the older men who traced their airy arbours and trailed their dainty vines and set their delicate grotesques, in a manner half playful and wholly charming.

But when the cartouche appeared, what is the effect? It is as though a boxful of old brooches had been at hand and these were set, symmetrically balanced, around the frame, and the spaces between filled with miscellaneous ornament on a scale of sumptuous size. Confusing, this, and a far cry from harmony. Yet, such are the seductions of tapestry in colour and texture, and so caressing is the hand of time, that these borders of the Seventeenth Century given us by Italy and Flanders, are full of interest and beauty.

The very bombast of them gives joy. Who can stand before the Barberini set, *The Mysteries of the Life and Death of Jesus Christ,* bequeathed to the Cathedral of St. John, the Divine, in New York, by Mrs. Clarke, without being more than pleased to recognise in the border the indefatigable Barberini bee? We are human enough to glance at the pictures of sacred scenes as on a tale that is told, but that potent insect makes us at once acquainted with a family of renown, puts us on a friendly footing with a great cardinal of the house, reminds us of sundry wanderings of our own in Rome; and then, suddenly flashes from its wings a memory of the great conqueror of Europe, who after the Italian campaign, set this bee among his own personal symbols and called it Napoleonic. Yes, these things interest us enormously, personally, for they pique imagination and help memory to fit together neatly the wandering bits of history's jigsaw puzzle. Besides this, they help the work of identifying old tapestries, a pleasure so keen that every sense is enlivened thereby.

When decorative design deserts the Greek example, it strays on dangerous ground, unless Nature is the model. The Italians of the Seventeenth Century tired of forever imitating and copying, lost all their refinement in the effort to originate. Grossness, sensuality took the place of fine purity in border designs. Inflation, so to speak, replaced inspiration.

Amorini—the word can hardly be used without suggesting the gay babes who tumble deliciously among Correggio's clouds or who snatch flowers in ways of grace, on every sort of decoration. In these later drawings, these tapestry borders of say 1650, they are monsters of distortion, and resemble not at all the rosy child we know in the flesh. They are overfed, self-indulgent, steeped in the wisdom of a corrupt and licentious experience. I cannot feel that anyone should like them, except as curiosities of a past century.

Heavy swags of fruit, searching for larger things, changed to pumpkins, melons, in the gross fashion of enlarged designs for borders. Almost they fell of their own weight. Cornucopias spilled out, each one, the harvest of an acre. And thus paucity of imagination was replaced by increase in the size of each object used in filling up the border's allotted space.

After this riot had continued long enough in its inebriety, the corrective came through the influence of Rubens in the North and of Lebrun in France. These two geniuses knew how to gather into their control the art strength of their age, and to train it into intellectual results. Mere bulk, mere space-filling, had to give way under the mind force of these two men, who by their superb invention gave new standards to decorative art in Flanders and in France. Drawings were made in scale again, and designs were built in harmony, constructed not merely to catch the eye, but to gratify the logical mind.

The day was for the grandiose in borders. The petite and *mignonne* of Raphael's grotesques was no longer suited to the people, or, to put it otherwise, the people were not such as seek expression in refinement, for all art is but the visible evidence of a state of mind or soul.

The wish to be sumptuous and superb, then, was a force, and so the art expressed it, but in a way that holds our admiration. A stroll in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, shows us better than words the perfection of design at this grandiose era. There one sees *Antony and Cleopatra* of Rubens—probably. On these hangings the border has all the evidences of genius. If there were no picture at all to enclose, if there were but this decorative frame, a superb inspiration would be flaunted. From substantial urns at right and left, springs the design at the sides which mounts higher and higher, design on design, but always with probability. That is the secret of its beauty, its probability, yet we are cheated all the time and like it. No vase of fruit could ever uphold a cupid's frolic, nor could an emblematic bird support a chalice, yet the artist makes it seem so. Note how he hangs his swags, and swings his amorini, from the horizontal borders. He first sets a good strong architectural moulding of classic egg-and-dart, and leaf, and into this able motive thrusts hooks and rings. From these solid facts he hangs his happy weight of fruit and flower and peachy flesh. Nothing could be more simple, nothing could be more logical. The cartouche at the top, he had no choice but to put it there, to hold the title of the picture, and at the bottom came a tiny landscape to balance. So much for fashion well executed.

Colours were reformed, too, at this time, for we are now at the era when tapestry had its last run of best days, that is to say, at the time when France began her wondrous ascendency under Louis XIV. In Italy colours had grown garish. Too much light in that country of the sun, flooded and over-coloured its pictured scenes. Tints were too strong, masses of blue and yellow and red glared all in tones purely bright. They may have suited the twilight of the church, the gloom of a palace closed in narrow streets, but they scourge the modern eye as does a blasting light. The Gothic days gave borders the deep soft tones of serious mood; the Renaissance played on a daintier scale; the Seventeenth Century rushed into too frank a palette.

It remained for Rubens and Lebrun to find a scheme both rich and subdued, to bring back the taste errant. Here let me note a peculiarity of colour, noticeable in work of Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century borders. The colour tone varies in different pieces of the same set, and this is not the result of fading, but was done by deliberate intent, one side border being light and another dark, or one entire border being lighter than others of the same set.

Lest in speaking of borders, too much reference might be made to the history of tapestry in general, I have left out Simon Vouet and Henri Lerambert as inspired composers of the frame which enclosed their cartoons; but it is well to say briefly that these men at least had not followed false gods, and were not guilty of the flagrant offence to taste that put a smirch on Italian art. These are the men who preceded the establishment of State ateliers under Louis XIV and who made productive the reign of Henri IV.

If Rubens kept to a style of large detail, that was a popular one and had many followers in a grandiose age. Lebrun in borders harked back to the classics of Greece and Rome, thus restoring the exquisite quality of delicacy associated with a thousand designs of amphoræ, foliated scrolls and light grotesques. But he expressed himself more individually and daringly in the series called *The Months* and *The Royal Residences.* This set is so celebrated, so delectable, so grateful to the eye of the tapestry lover, that familiarity with it must be assumed. You recollect it, once you have seen no more than a photograph of one of its squares. But it cannot be pertinent here, for it has no important border, say you. No, rather it is all border. Look what the cunning artist has done. His problem was to picture twelve country houses. To his mind it must have seemed like converting a room into an architect's office, to hang it full of buildings. But genius came to the front, his wonderful feeling for decoration, and lo, he filled his canvas with glorious foreground, full of things man lives with; columns, the size appropriate to the salon they are placed in; urns, peacocks, all the anteterrace frippery of the grand age, arranged in the foreground. Garlands are fresh hung on the columns as though our decorator had but just posed them, and beyond are clustered trees—with a small opening for a vista. Way off in the light-bathed distance stands the faithfully drawn château, but here, here where the observer stands, is all elegance and grace and welcome shade, and close friendship with luxury.

This work of Lebrun's is then the epitome of border. Greater than this hath no man done, to make a tapestry all border which yet so intensified the value of the small central design, that not even the royal patron, jealous of his own conspicuousness, discovered that art had replaced display.

After that a great change came. As the picture ever regulates the border, that change was but logical. After the "Sun King" came the regency of the effeminate Philippe, whom the Queen Mother had kept more like a court page than a man. Artists lapped over from the previous reign, and these were encouraged to develop the smaller, daintier, more effeminate designs that had already begun to assert their charm. Borders took on the new method. And as small space was needed for the curves and shells and latticed bands, the border narrower grew.

Like Alice, after the potent dose, the border shrank and shrank, until in time it became a gold frame, like the *encadrement* of any easel picture. And that, too, was logical, for tapestries became at this time like painted pictures, and lost their original significance of undulating hangings.

The well-known motives of the Louis XV decoration rippled around the edge of the tapestry, woven in shades of yellow silk and imitated well the carved and gilded wood of other frames, those of chairs and screens and paintings. There are those who deplore the mode, but at least it seems appropriate to the style of picture it encloses.

And here let us consider a moment this matter of appropriateness. So far we have thought only of tapestries and their borders as inseparable, and as composed at the same time. But, alas, this is the ideal; the fact is that in the habit which weavers had of repeating their sets when a model proved a favourite among patrons, led them into providing variety by setting up a different border around the drawing. As this reproducing, this copying of old cartoons was sometimes done one or two hundred years after the original was drawn, we find an anachronism most disagreeable to one who has an orderly mind, who hates to see a telephone in a Venus' shell, for instance. The whole thing is thrown out of key. It is as though your old family portrait of the Colonial Governor was framed in "art nouveau."

The big men, the almost divine Raphael, and later Rubens, felt so keenly the necessity of harmony between picture and frame, that they were not above drawing their own borders, and it is evident they delighted in the work. But Raphael's cartoons went not only to Brussels, but elsewhere, and somehow the borders got left behind; and thus we see his celebrated suite of *Acts of the Apostles* with a different entourage in the Madrid set from what it bears in Rome.

There is another matter, and this has to do with commerce more than art. An old tapestry is of such value that mere association with it adds to the market price of newer work. So it is that sometimes a whole border is cut off and transferred to an inferior tapestry, and the tapestry thus denuded is surrounded with a border woven nowadays in some atelier of repairs, copied from an old design.

Let such desecrators beware. The border of a tapestry must appertain, must be an integral part of the whole design for the sake of artistic harmony.

CHAPTER XXI

TAPESTRY MARKS

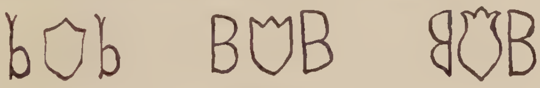
REGARDLESS of what a man's longing for fame may have been in the Middle Ages, he let his works pass into the world without a sign upon them that portrayed their author. This is as true of the lesser arts as of the greater. It was not the fashion in the days of Giotto, nor of Raphael, to sign a painting in vermillion with a flourished underscore. The artist was content to sink individuality in the general good, to work for art's sake, not for personal fame.

This was true of the lesser artists who wove or directed the weaving of the tapestries called Gothic, not only through the time of the simple earnest primitives, but through the brilliant high development of that style as shown at the studio of Jean de Rome, of the Brussels ateliers, through the years lying between the close of the Fifteenth Century and the Raphael invasion.

Even that important event brought no consequence of that sort. The freemasonry among celebrities in those days showed its perfection by this very lack of signed work. Everybody knew the man by his works, and the works by their excellence.

Tapestry marks were non-existent as a system until the Brussels edict of 1528 made them compulsory in that town. Documents and history have been less unkind to those early workers, and to those of us who like to feel the thrill of human brotherhood as it connects the artist and craftsman centuries dead with our own strife for the ideal. Nicolas Bataille in 1379 cannot remain unknown since the publishing of certain documents concerning his Christmas task of the *Apocalypse,* and there are scores of known master weavers reaching up through the ages to the time when marks began.

The Brussels mark was the first. It was a simple and appropriate composition, a shield flanked with two letters B. These were capitals or not. One was reversed or not, with little arbitrariness, for the mark was legible and unmistakable in any case, even though the weaver took great liberties—as he sometimes did. The place for this mark was the galloon, and it was usually executed in a lighter colour, but a single tone.



BRUSSELS

So much for the town mark, which has a score or more of variations. In addition to this was the mark of the weaver or of the merchant who gave the commission. A pity it was thus to confound the two, to give such confusion between a gifted craftsman and a mere dealer. One was giving the years of his life and the cunning of his hand to the work, while the other did but please a rich or royal patron with his wares. But so it was, and we can but study over the symbols and glean at least that the tapestry was considered a worthy one, reached the high standard of the day, or it would have had no mark at all.

For it was thus that the marks were first adopted. They were for the protection of every one against fraud. High perfection made Brussels famous, but fame brought with it such a rush of patronage that only by lessening the quality of productions could orders be filled in such hot haste.

Tricks of the trade grew and prospered; there were tricks of dyeing after a tapestry was finished, in case the flesh tints or other light shades were not pleasing. There was a trick of dividing a large square into strips so that several looms might work upon it at once. And there was all manner of slighting in the weave, in the use of the comb which makes close the fabric, in the setting of the warp to make a less than usual number of threads to the inch. In fact, men tricked men as much in those days as in our own.

The fame of the city's industry was in danger. It was the province of the guild of tapestry-makers to protect it against its own evils. Thus, in 1528, a few years after the weaving of the Raphael tapestries, the law was made that all tapestries should bear the Brussels mark and that of the weaver or the client. Small tapestries were exempt, but at that time small tapestries were not frequent, or were simple verdures, and, charming as they are, they lacked the same intellectual effort of composition.

The Brussels guild stipulated the size at which the tapestry should be marked. It was given at six ells, a Flemish ell being about 27½ inches. Therefore, a tapestry under approximately thirteen feet might escape the order. But that was the day of large tapestries, the day of the Italian cartoonists, and important pieces reached that measure.

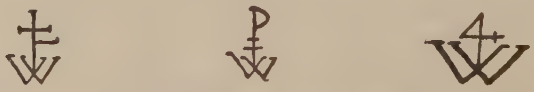
The guild of the tapissiers in Brussels, once started on restrictions, drew article after article, until it seemed that manacles were put on the masters' hands. To these restrictions the decadence of Brussels is ascribed, but that were like laying a criminal's fault to the laws of the country. Primarily must have been the desire to shirk, the intent to do questionable work. And behind that must have been a basic cause. Possibly it was one of those which we are apt to consider modern, that is, the desire to turn effort into the coin of the realm. All of the enormous quantity of orders received by Brussels in the days of her highest prosperity could not have been accepted had not the master of the ateliers pressed his underlings to highest speed.

Speed meant deterioration in quality of work, and so Brussels tried by laws to prevent this lamentable result, and to protect the fair fame of the symbol woven in the bordering galloon. The other sign which accompanied the town mark, of the two letters B, should have had excellent results, the personal mark of the weaver that his work might be known.

In spite of this spur to personal pride, the standard lessened in a few years, but not until certain weavers had won a fame that thrills even at this distance. Unfortunately, a great client was considered as important as a weaver, and it was often his arbitrary sign that was woven. And sometimes a dealer, wishing glory through his dealings, ordered his sign in the galloon. And thus comes a long array of signs which are not identifiable always. In general, one or two initials were introduced into these symbols, which were fanciful designs that any idle pencil might draw, but in the lapse of years it is not possible to know which able weaver or what great purveyor to royalty the letter A or B or C may have signified.

Happily the light of Wilhelm de Pannemaker could not be hid even by piling centuries upon it. His works were of such a nature that, like those of Van Aelst, who had no mark, they would always be known for their historic association. In illustration, there is his set of the *Conquest of Tunis* (plate facing page 62), woven under circumstances of interest. Even without a mark, it would still be known that the master weaver of Brussels (whom all acknowledged Pannemaker to be) set up his looms, so many that it must have seemed to the folk of Granada that a new industry had come to live among them. And it is a matter of Spanish history that the great Emperor Charles V carried in his train the court artist, Van Orley, that his exploits be pictured for the gratification of himself and posterity.

But Wilhelm de Pannemaker lived and worked in the time of marks, so his tapestries bear his sign in addition to the Brussels mark. Of symbols he had as many as nine or ten, but all of the same general character, taking as their main motive the W and the P of his name.



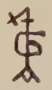
WILHELM DE PANNEMAKER

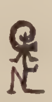
Incorporated into his sign, as into many others of the period, was a mark resembling a figure 4. Tradition has it that when this four was reversed, the tapestry was not for a private client, but for a dealer. One set of the *Vertumnus and Pomona* at Madrid (plates facing pages 72, 73, 74, 75) bears De Pannemaker's mark, while others have a conglomerate pencilling.

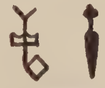
The sign of Jacques Geubels is, like W. de Pannemaker's, made up of his initials combined with fantastic lines which doubtless were full of meaning to their inventor, little as they convey to us. The example of Jacques Geubels' weaving given in the plate is from the Chicago Institute of Art. His time was late Sixteenth Century.

The *Acts of the Apostles* of Raphael, the first set, was woven by Peter van Aelst without a mark, but the set at Madrid bears the marks of several Brussels weavers, some attributed to Nicolas Leyniers.

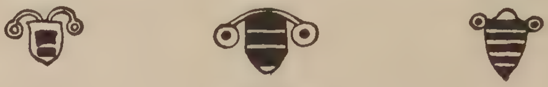
The desirability of distinguishing tapestries by marks in the galloon appealed to other weaving centres, and the method of Brussels found favour outside that town. Presently Bruges adopted a sign similar to that of her neighbour, by adding to the double B and shield a small b traversed by a crown.


JACQUES GEUBELS


NICOLAS LEYNIERS


BRUGES

In Oudenarde, that town of wonderful verdures, the weavers, as though by trick of modesty, often avoided such clues to identity as a woven letter might be, and adopted signs. However significant and famous they may have been in the Sixteenth Century, they mean little now. The town mark with which these were combined

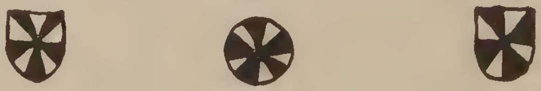


OUDENARDE

was distinctly a striped shield with decoration like antennæ.

Enghien is one of the tapestry towns of which we are gradually becoming aware. Its products have not always been recognised, but of late more interest is taken in this tributary to the great stream of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.

The famous Peter or Pierre van Aelst, selected from all of Flanders' able craftsmen to work for Raphael and



ENGHIEN

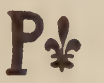
the Pope, was born in this little town, wove here and, more yet, was known as Pierre of Enghien. Yet it is the larger town of Brussels which wore his laurels.

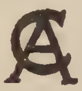
The Enghien town marks are an easy adaptation of the arms of the place, and the weavers' marks are generally monograms.

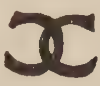
Weavers' marks, after playing about the eccentricities of cipher, changed in the Seventeenth Century to easily read initials, sometimes interlaced, sometimes apart. Later on it became the mode to weave the entire name. An example of these is the two letters C of Charles de

Comans on the galloon of *Meleager and Atalanta* (plate facing page 68); and the name G. V. D. Strecken in the *Antony and Cleopatra* (plate facing page 79).

Other countries than Flanders were wise in their generation, and placed the marks that are so welcome to the

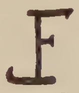

PARIS

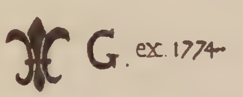

ALEX. DE COMANS


CHARLES DE COMANS

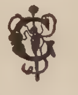
eye of the modern who seeks to know all the secrets of the tapestry before him. In the Seventeenth Century, when Paris was gathering her scattered decorative force for later demonstration at the Gobelins, the city had a pretty mark for its own, a simple fleur-de-lis and the initial P, and the initials of the weaver.

That Jean Lefèvre, who with his father Pierre was imported into Italy to set the mode of able weaving for the


JEAN LEFÈRVE

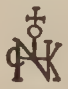


GOBELINS, 18TH CENTURY

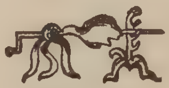

GOBELINS, MODERN

Florentines, had a sign unmistakable on the Gobelins tapestries of the *History of the King*. (Plate facing page 114.) It was a simple monogram or union of his initials. In the Eighteenth Century the Gobelins took the fleur-de-lis of Paris, and its own initial letter G. The modern Gobelins' marks combined the G with an implement of the craft, a *broche* and a straying thread.

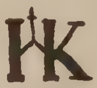
In Italy, in the middle of the Sixteenth Century, we find the able Flemings, Nicolas Karcher and John Rost, using their personal marks after the manner of their country. Karcher thus signed his marvellously executed grotesques of Bacchiacca which hang in the gallery of tapestries in Florence. (Plates facing pages 48 and 49.) John



KARCHER, FLORENCE



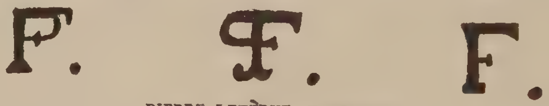
JOHN ROST



KARCHER, FERRARA

Rost's fancy led him to pun upon his name by illustrating a fowl roasting on the spit. Karcher had a little different mark in the Ferrara looms, where he went at the call of the d'Este Duke.

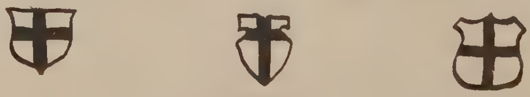
The Florence factory made a mark of its own, refreshingly simple, avoiding all of the cabalistic intricacies that are so often made meaningless by the passing of the years, and which were affected by the early Brussels weavers.



PIERRE LEFÈRVE, FLORENCE

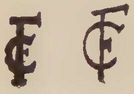
The mark found on Florence tapestries is the famous Florentine lily, and the initial of the town. The mark of Pierre Lefèvre, when weaving here, was a combination of letters.

When the Mortlake factory was established in England, the date was sufficiently late, 1619, for marking to be considered a necessity. The factory mark was a simple shield quartered by means of a cross thrown thereon.

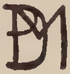


MORTLAKE

Sir Francis Crane contented himself with a simple F. C., one a-top the other, as his identification. Philip de Maecht, he whose family went from Holland to England as tapissiers, directed at Mortlake the weaving of a part of the celebrated *Vulcan* and *Venus* series, and his monogram can be seen on *The Expulsion of Vulcan from Olympus* (colored plate facing page 170), owned by Mrs. A. von Zedlitz, as well as in the other rare *Vulcan* pieces owned by Philip Hiss, Esq. This same Philip de Maecht worked under De Comans in Paris, he having been decoyed thence by the wise organisers of Mortlake.

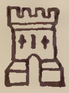


SIR FRANCIS CRANE

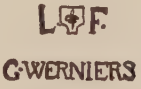


PHILIP DE MAECHT

The marks on tapestries are as numerous as the marks on china or silver, and the absence of marks confronts the hunter of signs with baffling blankness. as is the case of many very old wares, whether china, silver or tapestries. Also, late work of poor quality is unmarked. Having thus disposed of the situation, it remains to identify the marks when they exist. The exhaustive works of the French writers must be consulted for this pleasure. There are hundreds of known signs, but there exist also many unidentified signs, yet the presence of a sign of any kind is a keen joy to the owner of a hanging which displays it.



TOURNAY



LILLE

CHAPTER XXII

HOW IT IS MADE

WANTING to see the wheels go 'round is a desire not limited to babes. We, with our minds stocked with the history and romance of tapestry, yet want to know just how it is made in every particular, just how the loom works, how the threads are placed.

It seems that there must be some obscure and occult secret hidden within the looms that work such magic, and we want to pluck it out, lay it in the sunlight and dissect its intricacies. Well, then, let us enter a tapestry factory and see what is there. But it is safe to forecast the final deduction—which must ever be that the god of patience is here omnipotent. Talent there must be, but even that is without avail if patience lacks.

The factory for tapestries seems, then, little like a factory. The belt and wheel, the throb and haste are not there. The whole place seems like a quiet school, where tasks are done in silence broken by an occasional voice or two. It is a place where every one seems bent on accomplishing a brave amount of fancy-work; a kindergarten, if you like, for grown-ups.

Within are many departments of labour. The looms are the thing, of course, so must be considered first, although much preparing is done before their work can be begun.

The looms are classic in their method, in their simplicity. They have scarcely changed since the days when Solomon built his Temple and draped it with such gorgeous hangings that even the inspired writers digress to emphasise their richness with long descriptions that could not possibly have assisted the cause of their religion.

The stitch made by the modern loom is the same as that made by the looms of the furthermost-back Egyptian, by the Greeks, by the Chinese, of primitive peoples everywhere, by the people of the East in the familiar Khelim rugs, and by the aborigines of the two Americas. There is nothing new, nothing obscure about it, being a simple weaving of warp and woof. Penelope's loom was the same almost as that in use to-day at the Gobelins factory in Paris. Archeologists have discovered pictures of the ancient Egyptian loom, and of Penelope's, and there is but little change from the times of these ladies to our days.

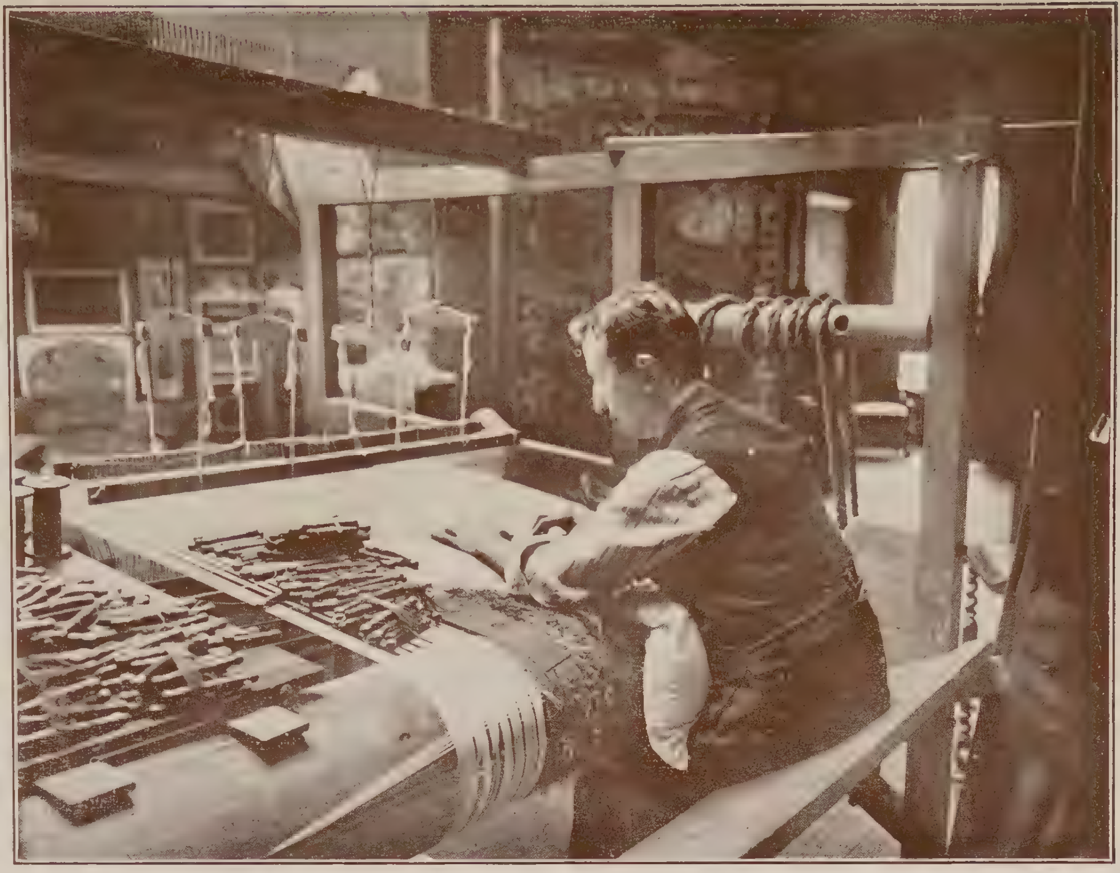
The fact is, the work is hand-work, must always be so, and the loom is but a tool for its working, a tool which keeps in place the threads set by hand. That is why tapestry must always be valuable and original and no more possible to copy by machine than is a painting.

High warp and low warp are the terms so often used as to seem a shibboleth. *Haute lisse* and *basse lisse* are their French equivalents. They describe the two kinds of looms, the former signifying the loom which stands upright, or high; the latter indicating the loom which is extended horizontally or low. On the high loom, the instrument which holds the thread is called the *broche,* and on the low loom it is called the *flute.*

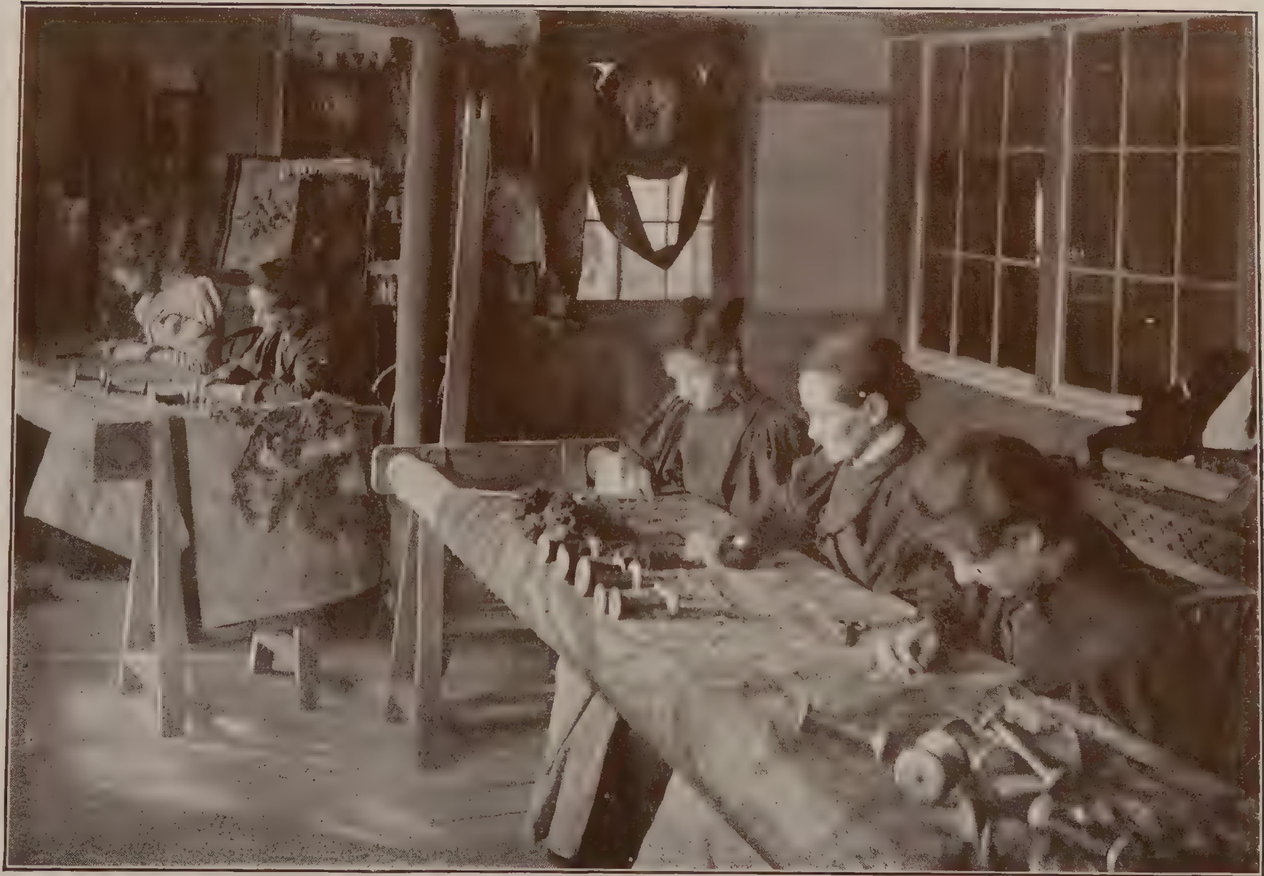
The stitch produced by the two is the same. The manner of producing it varies in convenience to the operators, the low-warp being the easier, or at least the more convenient and therefore the quicker method.

The cynic is ever ready to say that the tyrant living within a man declares only for those things which represent great sacrifice of time and effort on the part of other men. Perhaps it is true, and that therein lies the preference of the connoisseur in tapestry for the works of the high-warp loom. Even the wisest experts cannot always tell by an examination of a fabric, on which sort of loom it was woven, high warp or low, other evidence being excluded.

The high loom has, then, the threads of its warp hung like a weighted veil, from the top of the loom to the floor, with a huge wooden roller to receive the finished fabric at the bottom and one at the top for the yet unneeded threads. Each thread of the warp is caught by a loop, which in turn is fastened to a movable bar, and by means of this the worker is able to advance or withdraw the alternate threads for the casting of the *broche* or *flute,* which is the shuttle. Behind the veil of the warp sits the weaver—*tissier* or *tapissier*—with his supply of coloured thread; back of him is the cartoon he is copying. He can only see his work by means of a little mirror the other side of his warp, which reflects it. The only indulgence that convenience accords him is a tracing on the white threads of the warp, a copy of the picture he is weaving. Thus stands the prisoner of art, sentenced to hard labour,



WEAVER AT WORK ON LOW LOOM. HERTER STUDIO



SEWING AND REPAIR DEPARTMENT. BAUMGARTEN ATELIERS but with the heart-swelling joy of creating, to lighten his task.

High-warp looms were those that made famous the tapestries of Arras in the Fifteenth Century, of Brussels in the Sixteenth, and of Paris in the Seventeenth, therefore it is not strange that they are worshipped as having a resident, mysterious power.

To-day, the age of practicality, they scarcely exist outside the old Gobelins in Paris. But this is not the day of tapestry weaving.

A shuttle, thrown by machine, goes all the width of the fabric, back and forth. The *flute* or *broche,* which is the shuttle of the tapestry weaver, flies only as far as it is desired to thrust it, to finish the figure on which its especial colour is required. Thus, a leaf, a detail of any small sort, may mount higher and higher on the warp, to its completion, before other adjacent parts are attempted.

The effect of this is to leave open slits, petty gashes in the fabric, running lengthwise of the warp, and these are all united later with the needle, in the hands of the women who thus finish the pieces.

Unused colours wound on the hundreds of flutes are dropped at the demand of the pattern, left in a rich confusion of shades to be resumed by the workmen at will; but the threads are not severed, if the colour is to be used again soon.

Low-warp work is the same except for the weaver's position in relation to his work. Instead of the warp like a thin wall before his face, on which he seems to play as on one side of a harp, the warp is extended before him as a table. It is easy to see how much more convenient is this method.

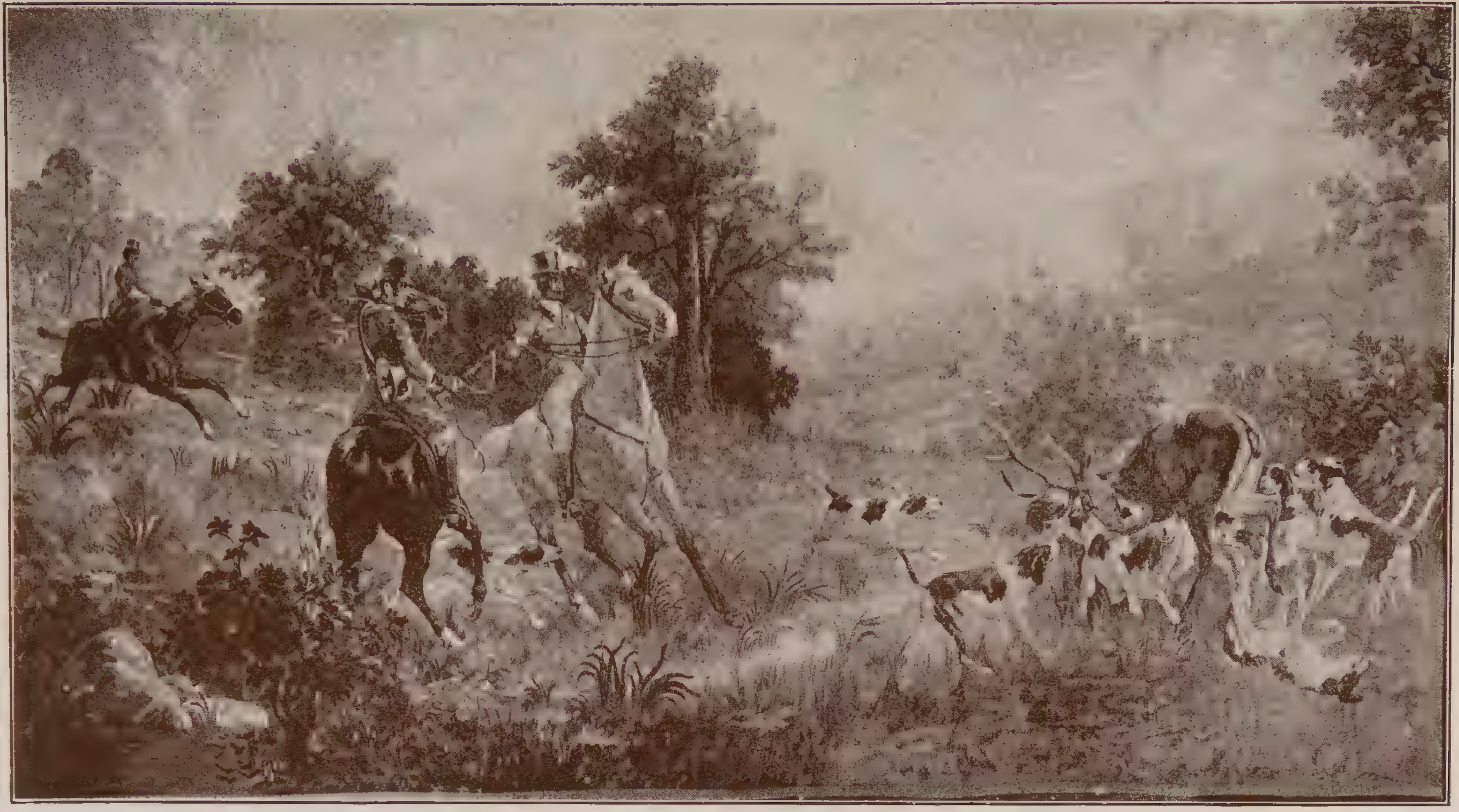
The wooden rollers are the same, one for the yet unused length of warp, the other for the finished fabric, and over one of these rollers the worker leans, protected from its hostile hardness by a pillow.

The pattern lies below, just beneath the warp, and easily seen through it, not the mere tracing as on the threads of the high-warp loom, but the coloured cartoon, so that shades may be followed as well as lines. It sometimes happens, however, in copying a valuable old tapestry, that a black and white drawing only is placed under the warp while the original is suspended behind the weavers, who look to it for colour suggestion.

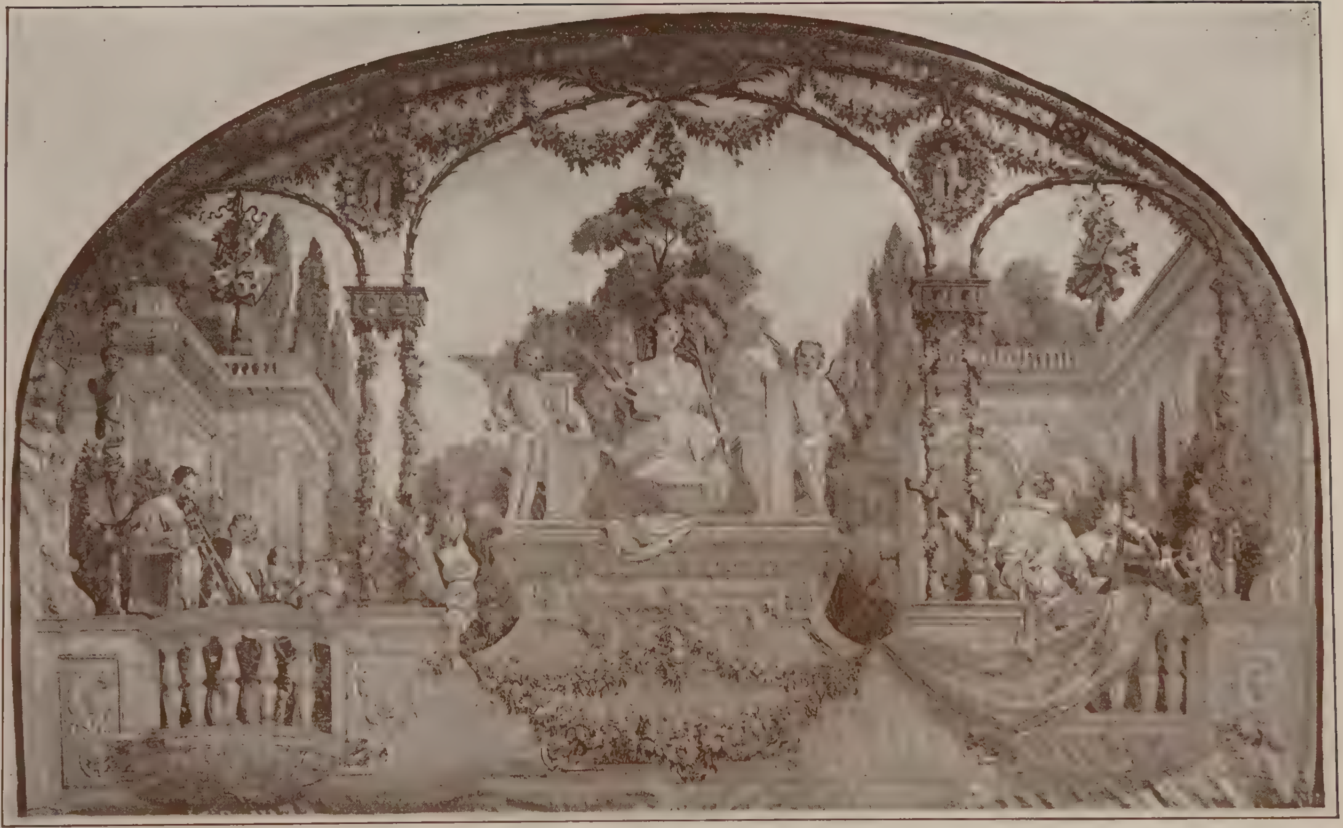
In low-warp the worker has the privilege of laying his flutes on top the work, the flutes not at the moment in use, and there they lie in convenient mass ready to resume for the figure abandoned for another. If the right hand thrusts the flute, it is the duty of the left to see that the alternate and the limiting threads of the warp are properly lifted. First comes a pressure of the foot on a long, lath-like pedal which is attached to the bar holding in turn the loops which pass around alternate threads.

That pressure lifts the threads, and the fingers of the left hand, deft and agile, limit and select those which the flute shall cover with its coloured woof.

After the casting of a thread, or of a group of threads, the weaver picks up a comb of steel or of ivory, and packs



BAUMGARTEN TAPESTRY. LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY



BAUMGARTEN TAPESTRY. MODERN CARTOON

hard the woof, one line against another, to make the fabric firm and even in the weaving.

Such then is the simple process of the looms, far simpler seen than described and yet depending absolutely for its beauty on the talent and patience of gifted workers. It is as simple as the alphabet, yet as complicated as the dictionary.

Patient years of apprenticeship must a man spend before he can become a good weaver, and then must he give the best years of his life to becoming perfect in the craft. But if the work is exacting, at least it is agreeable, almost lovable, and in delightful contrast to the labour of those who but tend machines driven by power. And if the art of tapestry weaving is almost a lost one to-day, at least the weavers can find in history much matter for pride. It is no mean ambition to follow the profession of conscientious Nicolas Bataille, of the able Pannemaker, of La Planche and Comans, of Tessier, Cozette, and a hundred others of family and fame.

Much preparation is necessary before the loom can be set going. First is the design, the cartoon. There we are in the department of the artist, and must talk in whispers. Raphael belongs there, and Leonardo; and Rubens, Teniers, Lebrun, Boucher and David, train us through the past centuries into our own.

But the cartoon of to-day is not so sacred a matter, and we may speak of it frankly—regretfully, too. Cartoons hang all over the walls of the tapestry factory, so much property for the setting of future scenes, and besides, they make a decoration which alone would lift the tapestry factory into the regions of art and class it among ateliers, instead of factories. The cartoons are painted, however, where the artist will, in his own studio or in one provided for the purpose by the director, as in the case of the Baumgarten works. They have the look of special designs. They are not done in the manner of a painting to be hung on a wall. Their brushwork is smooth and broad, dividing lines well distinguished by marked contrasts in colour to make possible their translation into the language of silk and wool.

After the cartoon is ready, comes the warp. That is set with the closeness agreed upon. Naturally, the smaller the thread of the warp, the closer is it set, the more threads to the inch, and thus comes fine fabric. Coarser warp means fewer threads to the inch, quicker work for the weaver and less value to the tapestry. From ten to twenty threads to the inch carries the limits of coarseness and fineness. In fine weaving, a weaver will accomplish but a square foot a week. Think of that, you who wonder at the price of tapestries ordered for the new drawing-room.

The warp comes to the factory all in big hanks of even thread. Nowadays it is usually of cotton, although they contend at the Gobelins that wool warp is preferable, for it gives the finished fabric a lightness and flexibility that the heavier, stiffer cotton destroys.

Setting the warp is a matter of patience and precision, and we will leave the workman with it, to make it the whole length of the tapestry to be woven, and to fasten the loops of thread around each *chaîne* and to fasten those in turn, alternating, to the bar by means of which they may be shifted to make the in-and-out of the weaving.

Then after choosing the colours, the weaving begins. It is like nothing so much as a piece of fancy-work. If it were not for the cumbersome loom, I am sure ladies would emulate the king who wove for amusement, and would make chair-pieces on the summer veranda.

But before the silks and wools go to the weaving they are treated to a beauty-bath in the dye-room. Hanks of wool and skeins of silk are but neutral matters, coming to the factory devoid of individuality, mere pale, soft bulk.

A room apart, somewhere away from the studio of design and the rooms where the looms stand stolid, is a laboratory of dyes, a place which looks like a farmhouse kitchen on preserving day. You sniff the air as you go in, the air that is swaying long bunches of pendulous colour, and it smells warm and moist and full of the suggestions of magic.

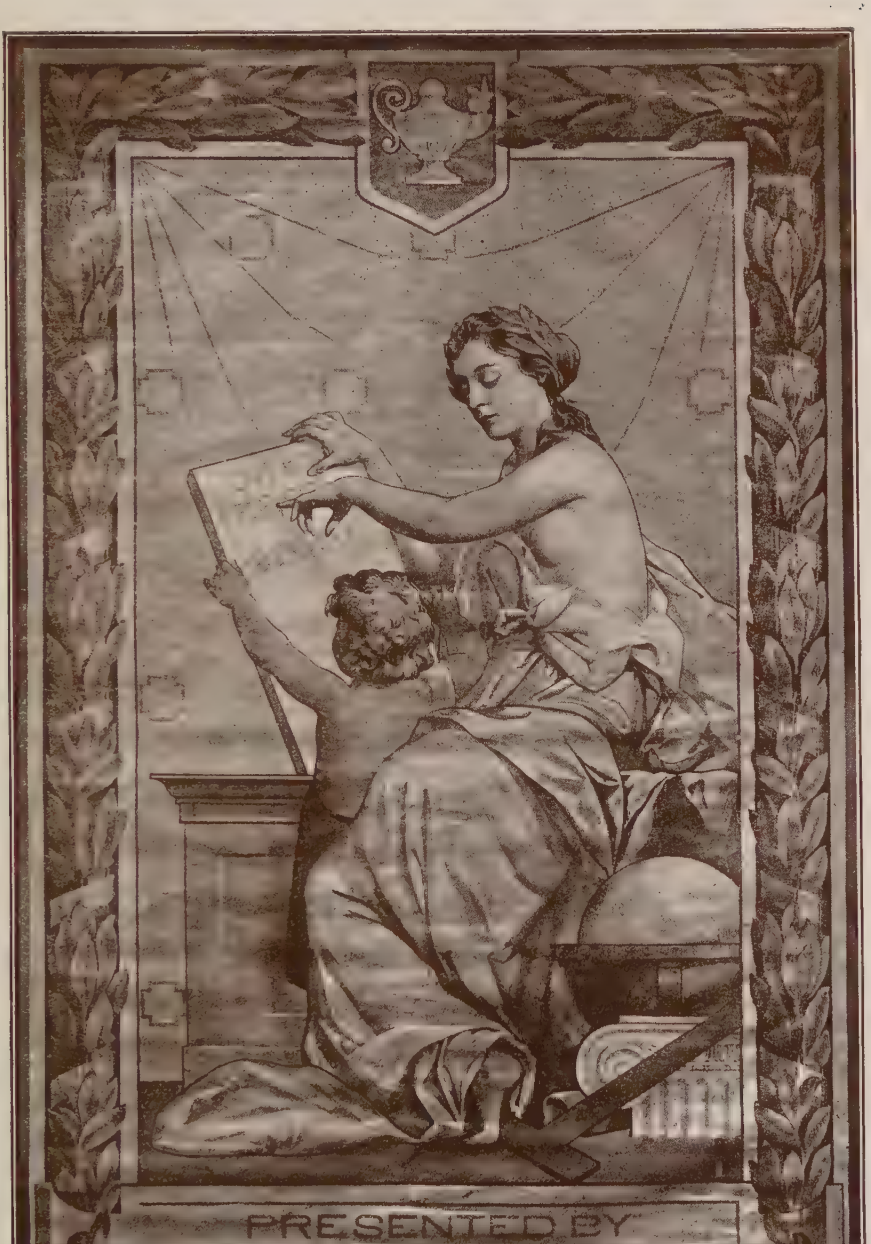
Over a big cauldron two men are bending, stirring a witches' broth to charm man's eye. One of the wooden paddles brings up a mass from the heavy liquid. It is silk, glistening rich, of the colour of melted rubies. Upstairs the looms are making it into a damask background onto which are thrown the garlands Boucher drew and Tessier loved to work.

Dainties fished up from another cauldron are strung along a line to dry, soft wool and shining silk, all in shades of grapes, of asters, of heliotropes, telling their manifest destiny. And beyond, are great bunches of colour, red which mounts a quivering scale to salmon pink, blue which sails into tempered gray, greens dancing to the note of the forest. It is a nature's workshop, a laboratory where the rainbow serves, apprenticed.

Jars, stone jars, little kegs, all ugly enough, are standing against the wall. But uncover one, touch the thick dark stuff within, and feast your eye on the colour left on a curious finger-tip. You are close to the cochineal, to indigo, and all the wonderful alchemy of colour.

Aniline? Not a bit of the treacherous stuff. It takes the eye, but it is a fickle friend. They say a mordant has been found to stay the flight of its lovely colours. Perhaps; it may be. But what weaver of tapestry would be willing to confide his labour to the care of a dye that has not known the test of ages? Aniline dye, says the director of a tapestry factory, may last twenty years—but twenty years is nothing in the life of a tapestry. Over in Paris, at the Gobelins, a master rules as chemist of the dyes, with the dignity of a special laboratory for making them.

In America, with no Government assuming the expense, the dyes are bought in such form that only expert dyers can use them in the few factories which exist. But no new hazards are taken. The matter is too serious. Economy in dyes brings too great disaster to contemplate. It is only too true that a man, several men, may labour a year to produce a perfect work, and that all the labour may be ruined by an ephemeral dye, by the escape of tones skilfully laid. Let commerce cheat in some other way, if it must, but not in this. Let the dye be honest, as enduring as the colours imprisoned in gems.



BAUMGARTEN TAPESTRY. MODERN CARTOON

It is a modern economy. The ancients knew not of it, and were willing to spend any amount on colours. More than that a port, or a nation, was willing to rest its fame on a single colour. Purple of Tyre, red of Turkey, yellow of China, are terms familiar through the ages, and think not these colours were to be had for the asking. They brought prices which we do not pay now even in this age of money. The brothers Gobelins—their fame originally rested on their ambition to be "dyers of scarlet," that being an ultimate test of skill.

It is a serious matter, that of dyeing wools and silks for tapestries, and one which the directors conduct within the walls of the tapestry factory. The Gobelins uses for its reds, cochineal or the roots of the madder; for blue, indigo and Prussian blue; for yellow, the vegetable colour extracted from gaude.

In America there is a specialist in dyes: Miss Charlotte Pendleton who gives her entire attention to rediscovering the dyes of the ancients, the dyes that made a city's fame. It is owing to her conscientious work that the tapestry repairers of museums can find appropriate threads.

It is interesting to trace the differing gamut of colour through the ages. Old dyes produced, old weavers needed, but twenty tones for the old work. Tapestries of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries were as simple in scale as stained glass, and as honest. Flesh tints were neutral by contrast to the splendid reds, honest yellows and rich greens. Colours meant something, then, too; had a sentimental language all their own. When white predominated, purity was implied; black was mortification of the flesh; livid yellow was tribulation; red, charity; green, meditation.

An examination of the colours in the series which depicts the life of Louis XIV, reveals a use of but seventy-nine colours. So up to that time, great honesty of dye, and fine decorative effect were preserved. The shades were produced by two little tricks open as the day, hatching being one, the other, winding two shades on the same broche or shuttle. Hatching, as we know, is merely a penman's trick, of shading with lines of light and dark.

It was when they began to paint the lily, in the days of pretty corruption, that the whole matter of dyeing changed. In the Eighteenth Century when the Regent Philip, and then La Pompadour, set the mode, things greatly altered. When big decorative effects were no more, the stimulating effect of deep strong colour was considered vulgar, and, only the suave sweetness of Boucher, Nattier, Fragonard, were admired. Every one played a pretty part, all life was a theatre of gay comedy, or a flattered miniature.

So, as we have seen, new times and new modes caused the Gobelins to copy paintings instead of to interpret cartoons—and there lay the destruction of their art. Instead of four-score tones, the dyers hung on their lines tens and tens of thousands. And the weavers wove them all into their fabric-painting, with the result that when the light lay on them long, the delicate shades faded and with them was lost the meaning of the design. And that is why the

Gobelins of the older time are worth more as decoration than those of the later.

We are doing a little better nowadays. There is a limit to the tones, and in all new work a decided tendency to abandon the copying of brush-shading in favour of a more restricted gamut of colour. By this means the future worker may regain the lost charm of the simple old pieces of work.

Another room in the factory of tapestry interests those who like to see the creation of things. It is one of the prettiest rooms of all, and is more than ever like a kindergarten for grown-ups. Or, if you like, it is a chamber in a feudal castle where the women gather when the men are gone to war.

Here the workers are all girls and women, each bending over a large embroidery frame supported at a convenient level from the floor. On one frame is a long flowered border with cartouches in the strong rich colours of Louis XIV. On another a sofa-seat copied from Boucher. They are both new, but like all work fresh from the loom are full of the open slits left in the process of weaving, a necessity of the changing colours and the requirements of the drawing.

All these little slits, varying from half an inch to several inches in length, must be sewed with strong, careful stitches before the tapestry can be considered complete.

On other frames are stretched old tapestries for repairs. At the Gobelins as many as forty women are thus employed. The malapropos deduction springs here that the demand for repaired old work is greater than that for new in the famous factory, for only six or eight weavers are there occupied.

Repairing is almost an art in itself. The emperor established a small school at Berlin for training girls in this trade. The studio of the late Mr. Ffoulke in Florence kept twenty or thirty girls occupied. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York has a repair studio under a graduate of the Berlin school. The factories of Baumgarten and of Herter, in New York, also conduct repairs; and the museum at Boston as well.

We cannot make old tapestries, but we can restore and preserve them by skilled labour in special ateliers. Restoration by the needle is the only perfect restoration, and this is as yet but little done here, although the method is so well known in Europe. We deplore the quicker way, to use the loom for weaving large sections of border or large bits which have gone into hopeless shreds, or have disappeared altogether by reason of the bitter years when tapestries had fallen into neglect. But the quicker way is the poorer, with these great claimants for time. The woven figures are relentless in this, that they claim of the living man a lion's share of his precious days. His reward is that they outlast him. Food for cynics lies there.

The careful worker looks close and sees the warp exposed like fiddle strings here and there. She matches the colour of silk and wool to the elusive shades and covers stitch by stitch the bare threads, in perfect imitation of the loom's way.

Sometimes the warp is gone. Then the work tests the best skill. The threads, the *chaîne,* must be picked up, one by one, and united invisibly to the new, and then the pattern woven over with the needle. It happens that large holes remain to be filled entirely, the pattern matched, the design caught or imagined from some other part of the fabric. That takes skill indeed. But it is done, and so well, that the repairer is called not that, but a restorer.

The two factories in New York, the Baumgarten and Herter ateliers, have certain employés always busy with repairs and restorations. Given even a fragment, the rest is supplied to make a perfect whole, in these studios where the manner of the old workers is so closely studied. For big repairs a drawing is made, a cartoon on the same principle as that of large cartoons, in colours, these following the old. Then it remains for the weaver to set his loom with the corresponding number of threads, that the new fabric may match the old in fineness. Then, too, comes the test of matching colours, a test that almost never discovers a worker equal to its exactions. That is as often as not the fault of the dyer who has supplied colours too fresh.

It is the repairs done by the needle that give the best effect, although such restorations are costly and slow.

Old repairs on old tapestries have been made, in some instances, very long ago. It often happens, in old sets, that a great piece of another tapestry has been roughly set in, like the knee-patches of a farm boy. The object has been merely to fill the hole, not to match colour scheme or figure. And these patches are by the judicious restorer taken out and their place carefully filled with the needle.

Moths, say some, do not devour old tapestries. The reason given is that the ancient wool is so desiccated as to be no longer nutritious. A pretty argument, but not to be trusted, for I have seen moths comfortably browsing on a Burgundian hanging, keeping house and raising families on such precious stuff.

Commerce demands that tricks shall be played in the repair room, but not such great ones that serious corruption will result. The coarse verdures of the Eighteenth Century that were thrown lightly off the looms with transient interest are sought now for coverings to antique chairs. To give the unbroken greens more charm, an occasional bird is snipped from a worn branch where he has long and mutely reposed, and is posed anew on the centre of a back or seat. It is the part of the repairer to see that he looks at home in his new surroundings.

If metal threads have not been spoken of in this chapter on *modus operandi,* it is because metal is so little used since the time of Louis XV as to warrant omitting it. And the little that appears seems very different from the "gold of Cyprus" that made gorgeous and valuable the tapestries of Arras, of Brussels and of old Paris.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY

A. D. 1066

SO long as one word continues to have more than one meaning, civilised man will continue to gain false impressions. The word tapestry suffers as much as any other—witness the attempt made for hundreds of years among all nations to set apart a word that shall be used only to designate the hand-woven pictured hangings and coverings discussed in this book; arras, gobelins, *toile peinte,* etc. In English, tapestry may mean almost any decorative stuff, and so comes it that we speak of the wonderful hanging which gives name to this chapter as the tapestry of Bayeux (plates facing pages 242, 243 and 244), when it is in reality an embroidery. But so much is it confused with true tapestry, and so poignantly does it interest the Anglo-Saxon that we will introduce it here, even while acknowledging its extraneous character.

To begin with, then, we say frankly that it is not a tapestry; that it has no place in this book. And then we will trail its length through a short review of its history and its interest as a human document of the first order.

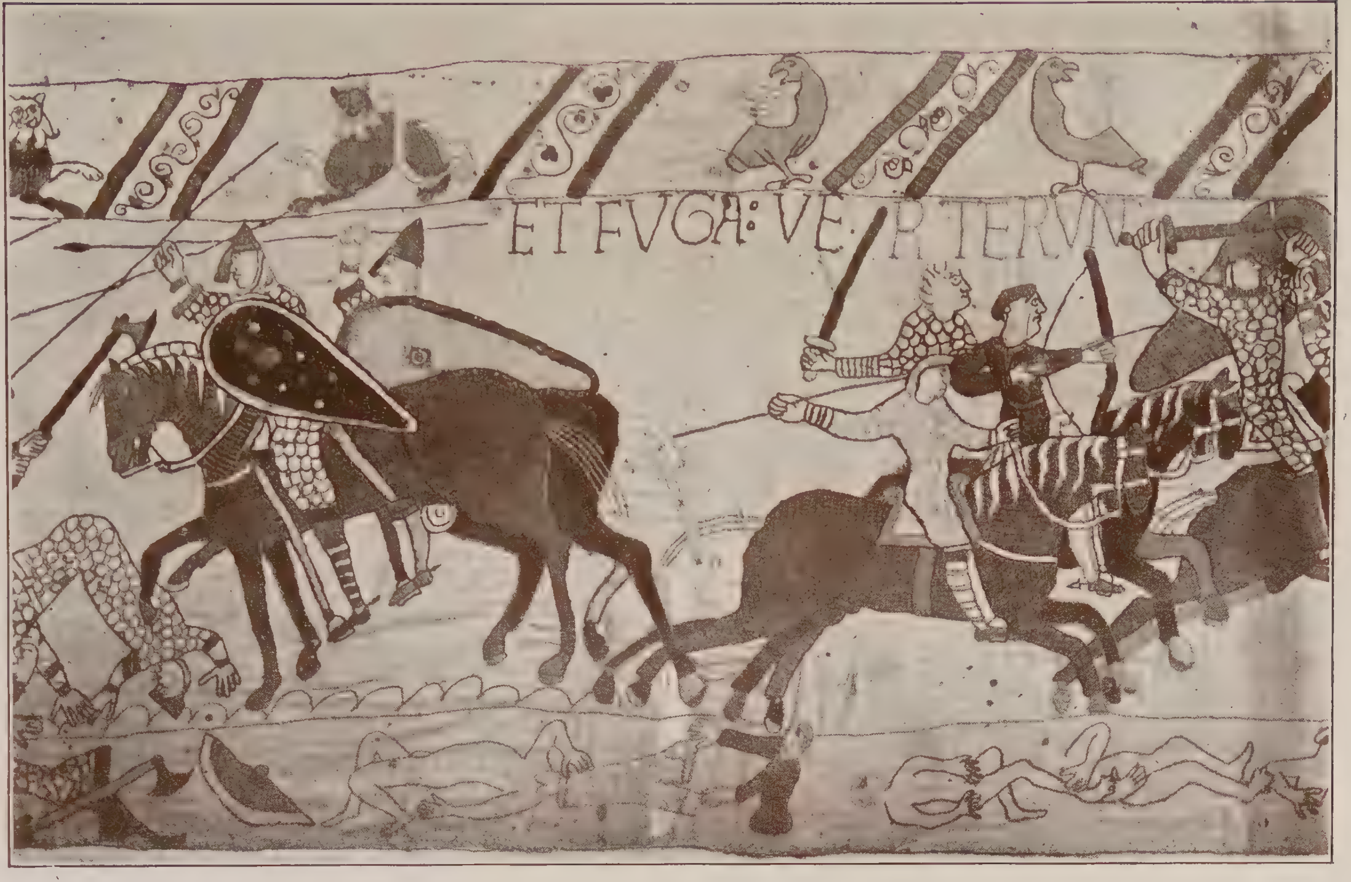
In itself it is a strip of holland—brown, heavy linen cloth, measuring in length about two hundred and thirty-one feet, and in width, nineteen and two-thirds inches—remarkable dimensions which are accounted for in the neatest way. The hanging was used in the cathedral of the little French city of Bayeux, draped entirely around the nave of the Norman Cathedral, which space it exactly covered. This indicates to archeologists the original purpose of the hanging.

On the brown linen is embroidered in coloured wools a panoramic succession of incidents, with border top and bottom. The colours are but eight, two shades each of green and blue, with yellow, dove-colour, red and brown.

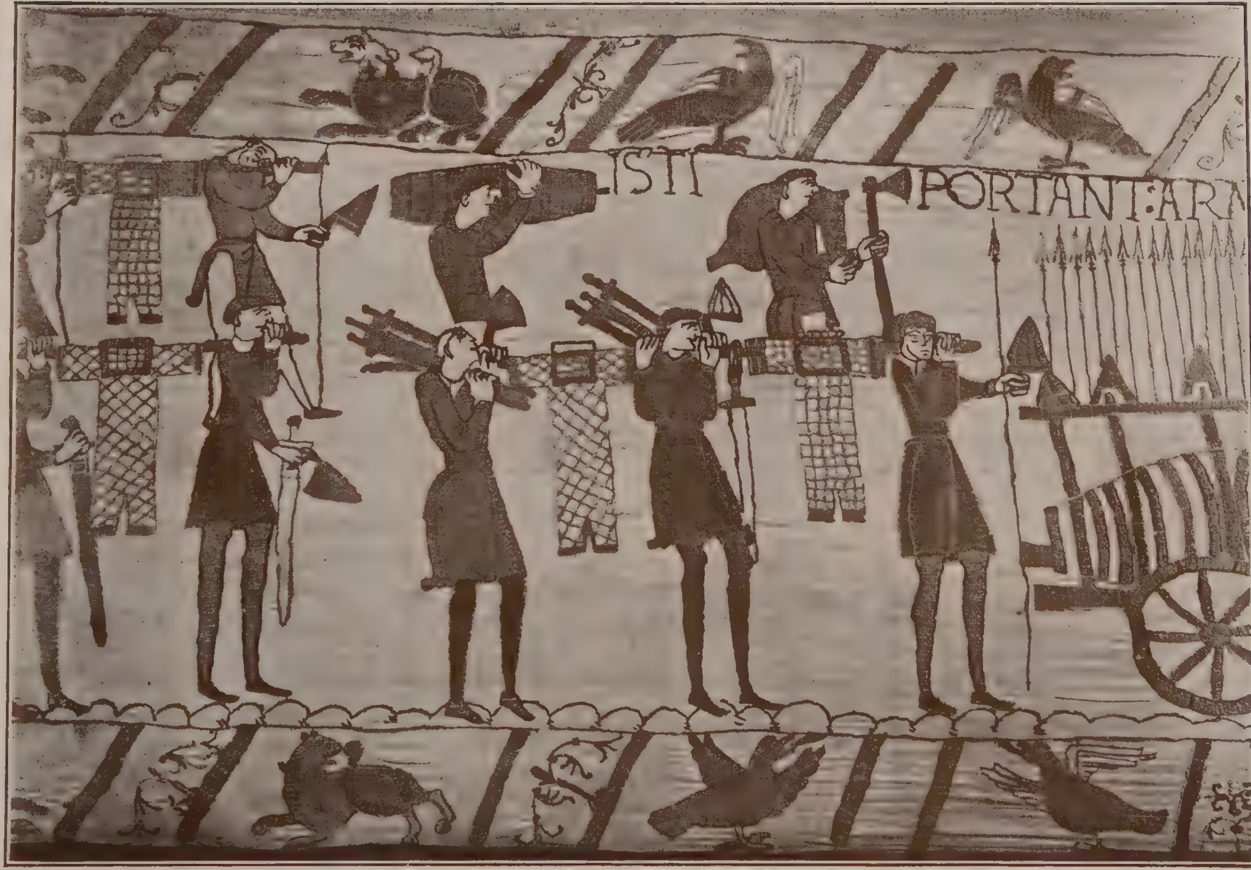
This, in brief, is the great Bayeux tapestry. But its threads breathe history; its stitches sing romance; and we who love to touch humorously the spirits of brothers who lived so long ago, find here the matter that humanly unites the Eleventh Century with the Twentieth.

The subject is the conquest of England by William the Conqueror in 1066. That is fixed beyond a doubt, so that the precious cloth cannot trail its ends any further back into antiquity than that event. However, even the most insatiable antiquarian of European specialties is smilingly content with such a date.

Legend has it that Queen Matilda, the wife of the conqueror, executed the work as an evidence of the devotion and adulation that were his due and her pleasure. There are lovely pictures in the mind of Matilda in the safety of the chambers of the old castle at Caen, directing each day a corps of lovely ladies in the task of their historic embroidery, each one sewing into the fabric her own secret thoughts of lover or husband absent on the great Conqueror's business. In absence of direct testimony to the contrary, why not let us believe this which



BAYEUX TAPESTRY (DETAIL), 1066



BAYEUX TAPESTRY (DETAIL), 1066

comes as near truth as any legend may, and fits the case most pleasantly?

The history it portrays in all its seventy-odd yards is easy enough to verify. That is like working out a puzzle with the key in hand. But the history of this keenly interesting embroidery is not so easy.

The records are niggardly. Inventories record it in 1369 and 1476. In an inventory of the Bishop of Bayeux it is mentioned in 1563. About this time it was in ecclesiastical hands and used for decorating the nave of the Bayeux Cathedral.

Then the world forgot it.

How the world rediscovered that which was never lost is interesting matter. Here is the story:

In 1724 an antiquarian found a drawing of about ten yards long, taken from the tapestry. Here, said he and his fellow sages, is the drawing of some wonderful, ancient work of art, most probably a frieze or other decoration carved in wood or stone. Naturally, the desire was to find such a monument. But no one could remember such a carving in any church or castle.

Father Montfaucon, of Saint Maur, with interest intelligent, wrote to the prior of St. Vigor's at Bayeux, and received the most satisfactory reply, that the drawing represented not a carving but a hanging in possession of his church, and associated with many yards more of the same cloth.

So all this time the wonderful relic had lain safe in Bayeux, and never was lost, but only forgotten by outsiders. The rediscovery, so-called, aroused much comment, and England declared the cloth the noblest monument of her history.

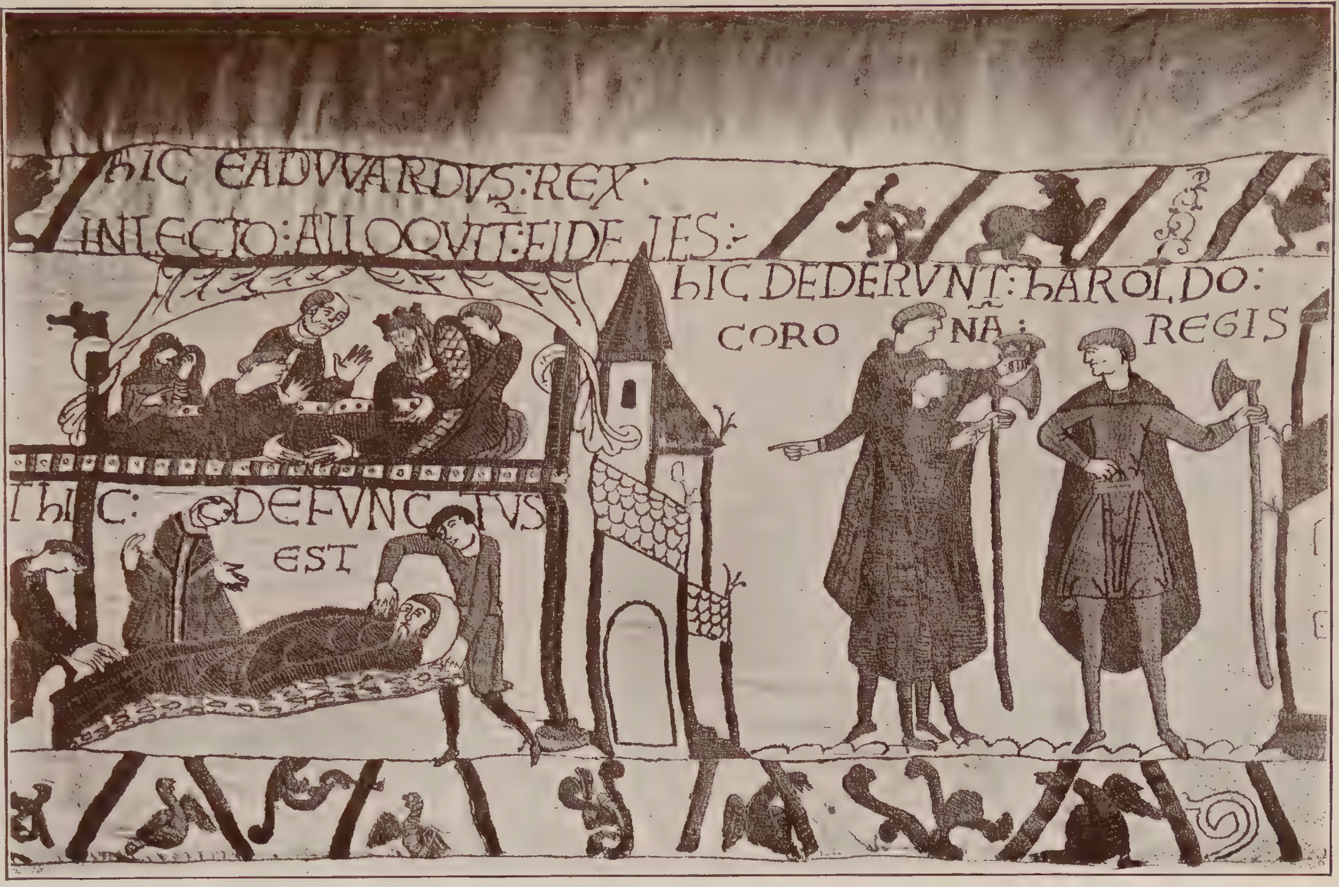
It was in use at that time, and after, once a year. It was hung around the cathedral nave on St. John's Day, and left for eight days that all the people might see it.

The fact that it was not religious in subject, that it could not possibly be interpreted otherwise than as a secular history, makes remarkable its place in the cathedral. This is explained by the suggestion that while Bishop Odo established that precedent, all others but followed without thought.

Since 1724 the world outside of Bayeux has never forgotten this panorama of a past age, and its history is known from that time on.

The Revolution of France had its effect even on this treasure; or would have had if the clergy had not been sufficiently capable to defend it. It was hidden in the depositories of the cathedral until the storm was over.

It seems there was no treasure in Europe unknown to Napoleon. He commanded in 1803 that the Bayeux tapestry, of which he had heard so much, be brought to the National Museum for his inspection. The playwrights of Paris seized on the pictured cloth as material for their imagination, and, refusing to take seriously the crude figures, wrote humorously of Matilda eternally at work over her ridiculous task, surrounded with simple ladies equally blind to art and nature. It is only too easy to let humour play about the ill-drawn figures. They must be taken grandly serious, or ridicule will thrust tongue in cheek. It is to these French plays of 1804 that



BAYEUX TAPESTRY (DETAIL), 1066

we owe the firmness of the tradition that Queen Matilda in 1066 worked the embroidery.

Napoleon returned the cloth to Bayeux, not to the church, but to the Hotel de Ville, in which manner it became the property of the civil authorities, instead of the ecclesiastic. It was rolled on cylinders, that by an easy mechanism it might be seen by visitors. But the fabric suffered much by the handling of a curious public. Even the most enlightened and considerate hands can break threads which time has played with for eight centuries.

It was decided, therefore, to give the ancient *toile fatiguée* a quiet, permanent home. For this purpose a museum was built, and about 1835 the great Bayeux tapestry was carefully installed behind glass, its full length extended on the walls for all to see who journey thither and who ring the guardian's bell at the courtyard's handsome portico.

Once since then, once only, has the venerable fabric left its cabinet. This was at the time of the Prussians when, in 1871, France trembled for even her most intimate and special treasures.

The tapestry was taken from its case, rolled with care and placed in a zinc cylinder, hermetically sealed. Then it was placed far from harm; but exactly where, is a secret that the guardians of the tapestry do well to conserve. There might be another trouble, and asylum needed for the treasure in the future.

The pictures of the great embroidery are such as a child might draw, for crudeness; but the archeologist knows how to read into them a thousand vital points. History helps out, too, with the story of Harold, moustached like the proper Englishman of to-day, taking a commission from William, riding gaily out on a gentleman's errand, not a warrior's. This is shown by the falcon on his wrist, that wonderful bird of the Middle Ages that marked the gentleman by his associations, marked the high-born man on an errand of peace or pleasure.

In these travelling days, no sooner do we land in Normandy than Mount St. Michael looms up as a happy pilgrimage. So to the same religious refuge Harold went on the pictured cloth, crossed the adjacent river in peril, and—how pleasingly does the past leap up and tap the present—he floundered in the quicksands that surround the Mount, and about which the driver of your carriage across the *passerelle* will tell you recent tales of similar flounderings.

And when in Brittany, who does not go to tumbley-down Dinan to see its ancient gates and walls, its palaces of Queen Anne, its lurching crowd of houses? It is thither that Harold, made of threads of ancient wool, sped and gave battle after the manner of his time.

Another link to make us love this relic of the olden time: It is the star, the star so great that the space of the picture is all too small to place it; so the excited hands of the embroiderers set it outside the limit, in the border.

It flames over false Harold's head and he remembers sombrely that it is an omen of a change of rule. He is king now, has usurped a throne, has had himself crowned. But for how long is he monarch, with this flaming menace burning into his courage? The year finishing saw the prophecy fulfilled by the coming of the conqueror.

It was this section of the tapestry that, when it came to Paris, had power to startle Napoleon, ever superstitious, ever ready to read signs. The star over Harold's head reminded him of the possible brevity of his own eminence.

The star that blazed in 1066—we have found it. It was not imaginary. Behold how prettily the bits of history fit together, even though we go far afield to find those bits. This one comes from China. Records were better kept there in those times than in Christian Europe; and the Chinese astronomers write of a star appearing April 2, 1066, which was seen first in the early morning sky, then after a time disappeared to reappear in the evening sky, with a flaming tail, most agreeably sensational. It was Halley's comet, the same that we watched in 1910 with no superstitious fear at all for princes nor for powers. But it is interesting to know that our modern comet was recorded in China in the Eleventh Century, and has its portrait on the Bayeux tapestry, and that it frightened the great Harold into a fit of guilty conscience.

The archeologist gives reason for the faith that is in him concerning the Bayeux tapestry by reading the language of its details, such as the style of arms used by its preposterous soldiers; by gestures; by groupings of its figures; and we are only too glad to believe his wondrous deductions.

There are in all fifteen hundred and twelve figures in this celebrated cloth, if one includes birds, beasts, boats, *et cetera,* with the men; and amidst all this elongated crowd is but one woman. Queen Matilda, left at home for months, immured with her ladies, probably had quite enough of women to refrain easily from portraying them. Needless to say, this one embroidered lady interests poignantly the archeologist.

Most of the animals are in the border—active little beasts who make a running accompaniment to the tale they adorn. This excepts the very wonderful horses ridden by knights of action.

Scenes of the pictured history of William's conquest are divided one from the other by trees. Possibly the archeologist sees in these evidences of extinct varieties, for not in all this round, green world do trees grow like unto those of the Bayeux tapestry. They are dream trees from the gardens of the Hesperides, and set in useful decoration to divide event from event and to give sensations to the student of the tree in ornament.

Such is the Bayeux tapestry, which, as was conscientiously forewarned, is not a tapestry at all, but the most interesting embroidery of Europe.

CHAPTER XXIV

TO-DAY

THE making of inspired tapestry does not belong to to-day. The *amour propre* suffers a distinct pain in this acknowledgment. It were far more agreeable to foster the feeling that this age is in advance of any other, that we are at the front of the world's progress.

So we are in many matters, but those matters are all bent toward one thing—making haste. Economy of time occupies the attention of scientist, inventor, labourer. Yet a lavish expenditure of time is the one thing the perfect tapestry inexorably demands, and that is the fundamental reason why it cannot now enter a brilliant period of production like those of the past.

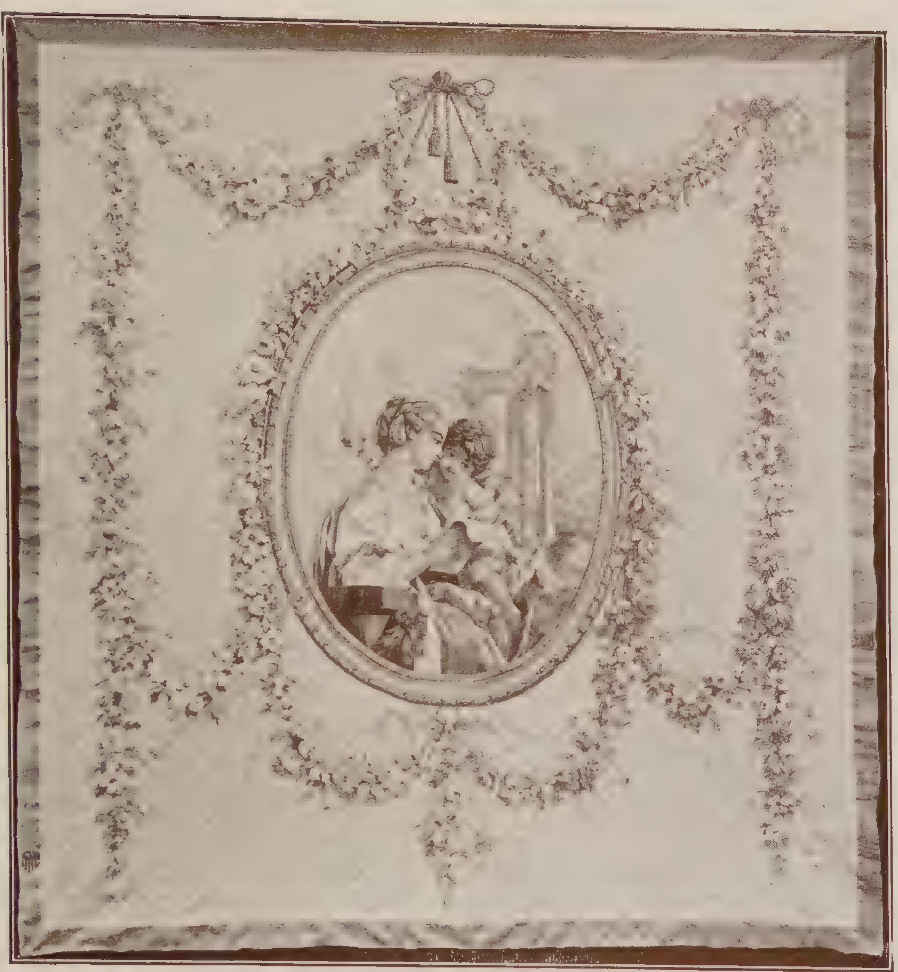
It is not that one atelier cannot find enough weavers to devote their lives to sober, leisurely production; it is that the stimulating effect is gone, of a craft eagerly pursued in various centres, where guilds may be formed, where healthy rivalry spurs to excellence, where the world of the fine arts is also vitally concerned.

The great hangings of the past were the natural expression of decoration in those days, the natural demand of pomp, of splendour and of comfort. As in all things great and small, the act is but the visible expression of an inward impulse, and we of to-day have not the spirit that expresses itself in the reverent building of cathedrals, or in the inspired composition of tapestries.

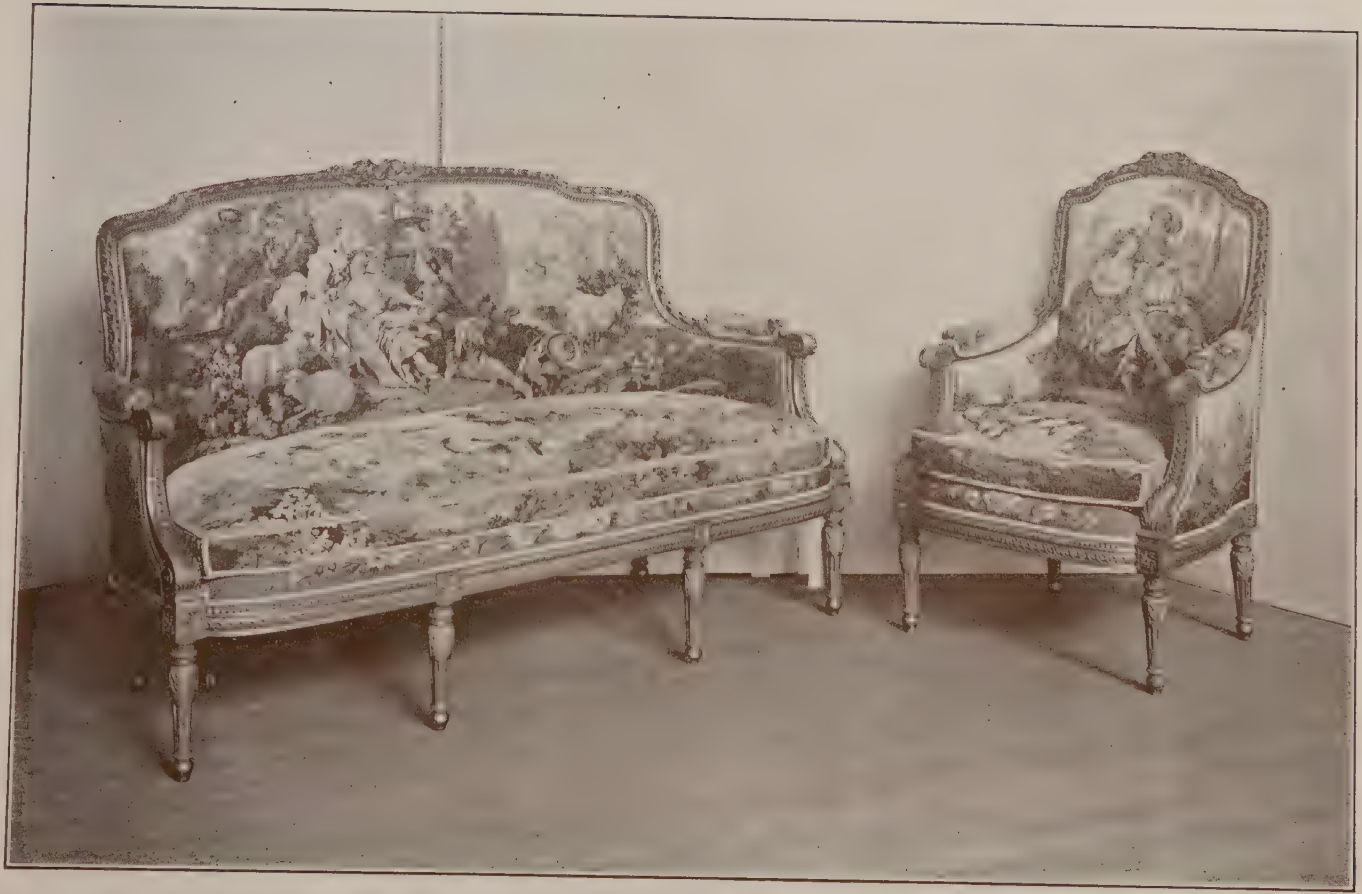
This is to be entirely distinguished from appreciation. That gift we have, and it is momentarily increasing. To be entirely commercial, which view is of course not the right one, one need only watch the reports of sales at home and abroad to see what this latter-day appreciation means in pelf. In England a tapestry was recently unearthed and identified as one of the series of seven woven for Cardinal Woolsey. It is not of extraordinary size, but was woven in the interesting years hovering above and below the century mark of 1500. The time was when public favour spoke for the upholding of morality with a conspicuousness which could be called Puritanism, were the anachronism possible. Pointing a moral was the fundamental excuse for pictorial art. This tapestry represents one of *The Seven Deadly Sins*. Hampton Court displays the three other known pieces of the series, and he who harbours this most recent discovery has paid $33,000 for the privilege.

But that is a tiny sum compared to the price that rumour accredits Mr. Morgan with paying for *The Adoration of the Eternal Father* (called also *The Kingdom of Heaven*). And this is topped by $750,000 paid for a Boucher set of five pieces. One might continue to enumerate the sales where enormous sums are laid down in appreciation of the men whose excellence of work we cannot achieve, but these sums paid only show with pathetic discouragement the completeness with which the spirit of commercialism has replaced the spirit of art, at least in the expression of art that occupies our attention.

If, then, this is not an age of production, but of appre-



MODERN AMERICAN TAPESTRY, LOUIS XV INSPIRATION



MODERN AMERICAN TAPESTRY FROM FRENCH INSPIRATION ciation, it, too, has its natural expression. First it is the acquiring at any sacrifice of the ancient hangings wherever they are found; and after that it is their restoration and preservation. This is the reason for recent high prices and the reason, too, for the establishment of ateliers of repair, which are found in all large centres in Europe as well as wherever any important museum exists in America.

It would not be possible nor profitable to dwell on the tapestry repair shops of Europe. They have always been; the industry is one that has existed since the Burgundian dukes tore holes in their magnificent tapestries by dragging them over the face of Europe, and since Henry the Eighth, in eager imitation of the continentals, established in the royal household a supervisor of tapestry repairs. Paris is full of repairers, and in the little streets on the other side of the Seine old women sit in doorways on a sunny day, defeating the efforts of time to destroy the loved *toiles peintes*. But this haphazard repair, done on the knee, as a garment might be mended, is not comparable to the careful, exact work of the restorer at her frame. One ranks as woman's natural task of nine stitches, while the other is the work of intelligent patience and skilled endeavour.

Wherever looms are set up, a department of repair is the logical accompaniment. As every tapestry taken from the loom appears punctured with tiny slits, places left open in the weaving, and as all of these need careful sewing before the tapestry is finished, a corps of needlewomen is a part of a loom's equipment. This is true in all but the ateliers of the Merton Abbey factory, of which we shall speak later.

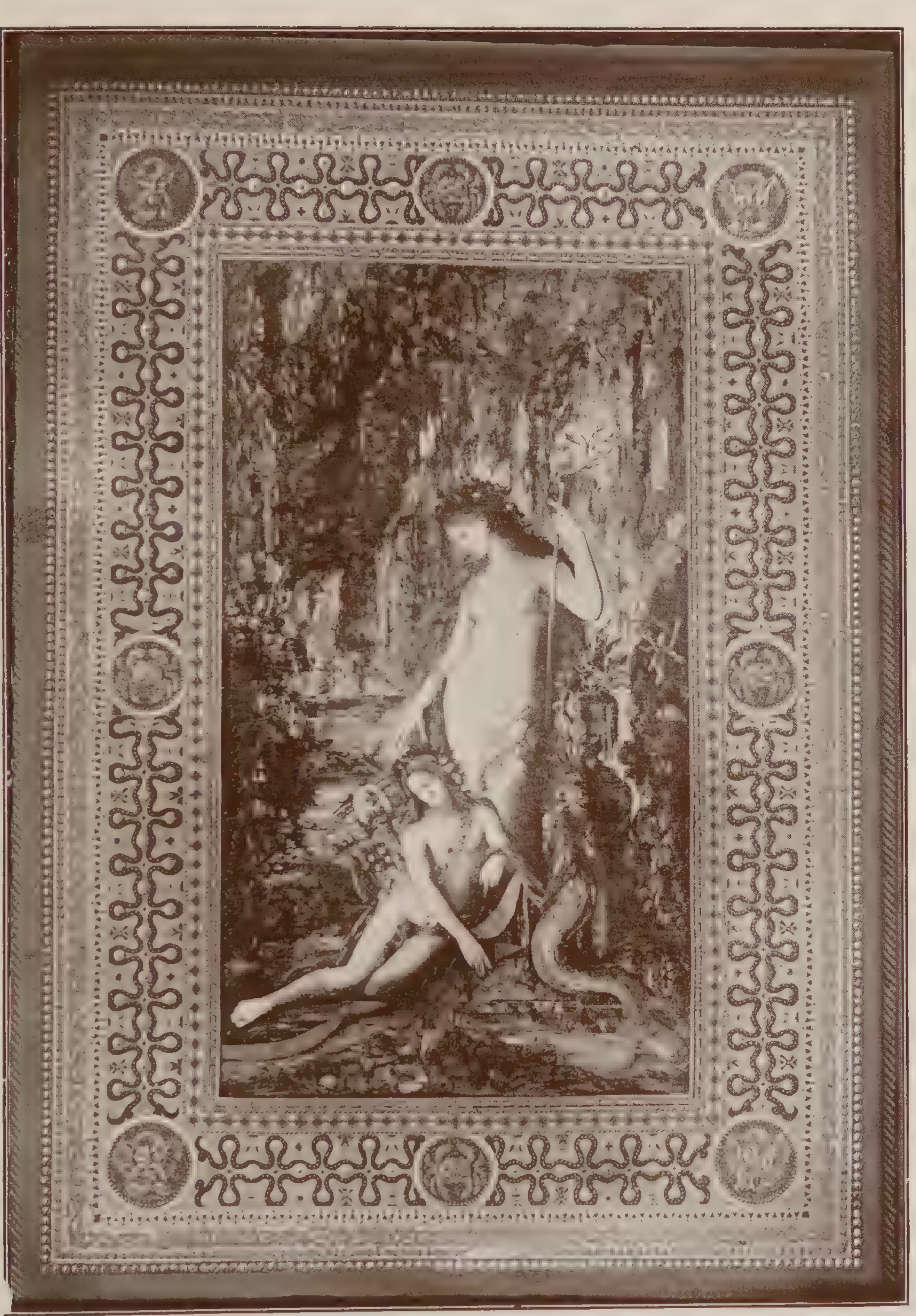
Apart from repairs, what is being done in the present day? So little that historians of the future are going to find scant pickings for their record.

FRANCE

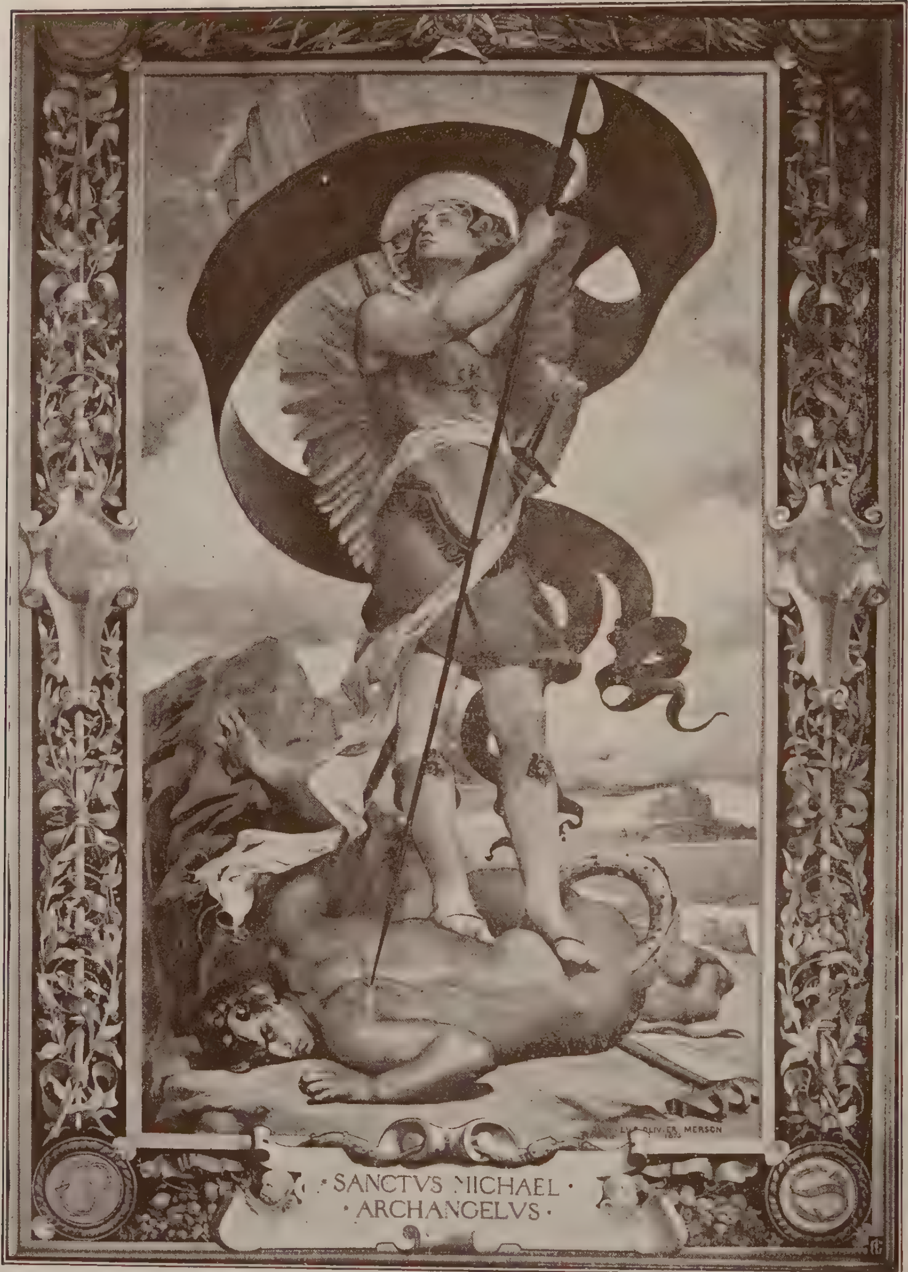
The Gobelins factory being the last one to make a permanent contribution to art, the impulse is to ask what it is doing now. That is easily answered, but there is no man so optimistic that he can find therein matter for hope.

France is commendably determined not to let the great industry die. It would seem a loss of ancient glory to shut down the Gobelins. Yet why does it live? It lives because a body of men have the patriotic pride to keep it alive. But as for its products, they are without inspiration, without beauty to the eye trained to higher expressions of art.

The Gobelins to-day is almost purely a museum, not only in the treasures it exposes in its collection of ancient "toiles," but because here is preserved the use of the high-warp loom, and the same method of manufacture as in other and better times. A crowd of interested folk drift in and out between the portals, survey the Pavilion of Louis XIV and the court, the garden and the stream, then, turning inside, the modern surveys the work of the ancient, the remnants of time. And no less curious and no less remote do the old tapestries seem than the atelier where the high looms rear their cylinders and mute men



GOBELINS TAPESTRY. LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY
Luxembourg, Paris



GOBELINS TAPESTRY. LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY
Pantheon, Paris

play their colour harmonies on the warp. It all seems of other times; it all seems dead. And it is a dead art.

The tapestries on the looms are garish, crude, modern art in its cheapest expression; or else they are brilliant-hued copies of time-softened paintings that were never meant to be translated into wool and silk.

The looms are always busy, nevertheless. There is always preserved a staff of officers, the director, the chemist of dyes, and all that; and the tapissiers are careful workmen, with perfection, not haste, in view. The State directs the work, the State pays for it, the State consumes the products. That is the Republic's way of continuing the craft that was the serious pleasure of kings. But there is now no personal element to give it the vital touch. There is no Gabrielle d'Estrées, nor Henri IV; no Medici, no Louis XIV, no Pompadour. All is impersonal, uninspired.

Men who have worked in the deadening influence of the Gobelins declare that the factory cannot last much longer. But it is improbable that France—Republican France, that holds with bourgeois tenacity to aristocratic evidences—will abandon this, her expensive toy, her inheritance of the time of kings.

In the time of the Second Empire it was the fashion to copy, at the Gobelins, the portraits of celebrated personages executed by Winterhalter. The exquisite portrait of the beautiful Empress Eugénie by this delectable court painter has a delicacy and grace that is all unhurt by contrast with more modern schools of painting. But fancy the texture of the lovely flesh copied in the medium of woven threads, no matter how delicately dyed and skilfully wrought. Painting is one art, tapestry-making is entirely another.

But that is just where the fault lay and continued, the inability of the Gobelins ateliers to understand that the two must not be confused. The same false idea that caused Winterhalter's portraits to be copied, gave to the modern tapissiers the paintings of the high Renaissance to reproduce. Titian's most celebrated works were set up on the loom, as for example the beautiful fancy known as *Sacred and Profane Love,* which perplexes the loiterer of to-day in the Villa Borghese. Other paintings copied were Rafael's *Transfiguration,* Guido René's *Aurora,* Andrea del Sarto's *Charity.* There were many more, but this list gives sufficiently well the condition of inspiration at the Gobelins up to the third quarter of the Nineteenth Century.

Paul Baudry appeared at about this time striking a clear pure note of delicate decoration. The few panels that he drew for the Gobelins charm the eye with happy reminiscences of Lebrun, of Claude Audran, a potpourri of petals fallen from the roses of yesterday mixed with the spices of to-day.

But if the work of this talented artist illustrates anything, it is the change in the uses of tapestries. The modern ones are made to be framed, as flat as the wall against which they are secured. In a word, they take the place of frescoes. The pleasure of touching a mobile fabric is lost. A fold in such a dainty piece would break its beauty. Almost must a woven panel of our day fit the panel it fills as exactly as the wood-work of a room fits its dimensions.

The Nineteenth Century at the Gobelins was finished by mistakenly copying Ghirlandajo, Correggio, others of their time.

In the beginning of this century, the spirit of pure decoration again became animated. Instead of copying old painters, the Gobelins began to copy old cartoons. The effect of this is to increase the responsibility of the weaver, and with responsibility comes strength.

The models of Boucher, and the *Grotesques* of Italian Renaissance drawing are given even now to the weavers as a training in both taste and skill. But better than all is the present wisdom of the Gobelins, which has directly faced the fact that it were better to copy the tapestries of old excellence than to copy paintings of no matter what altitude of art.

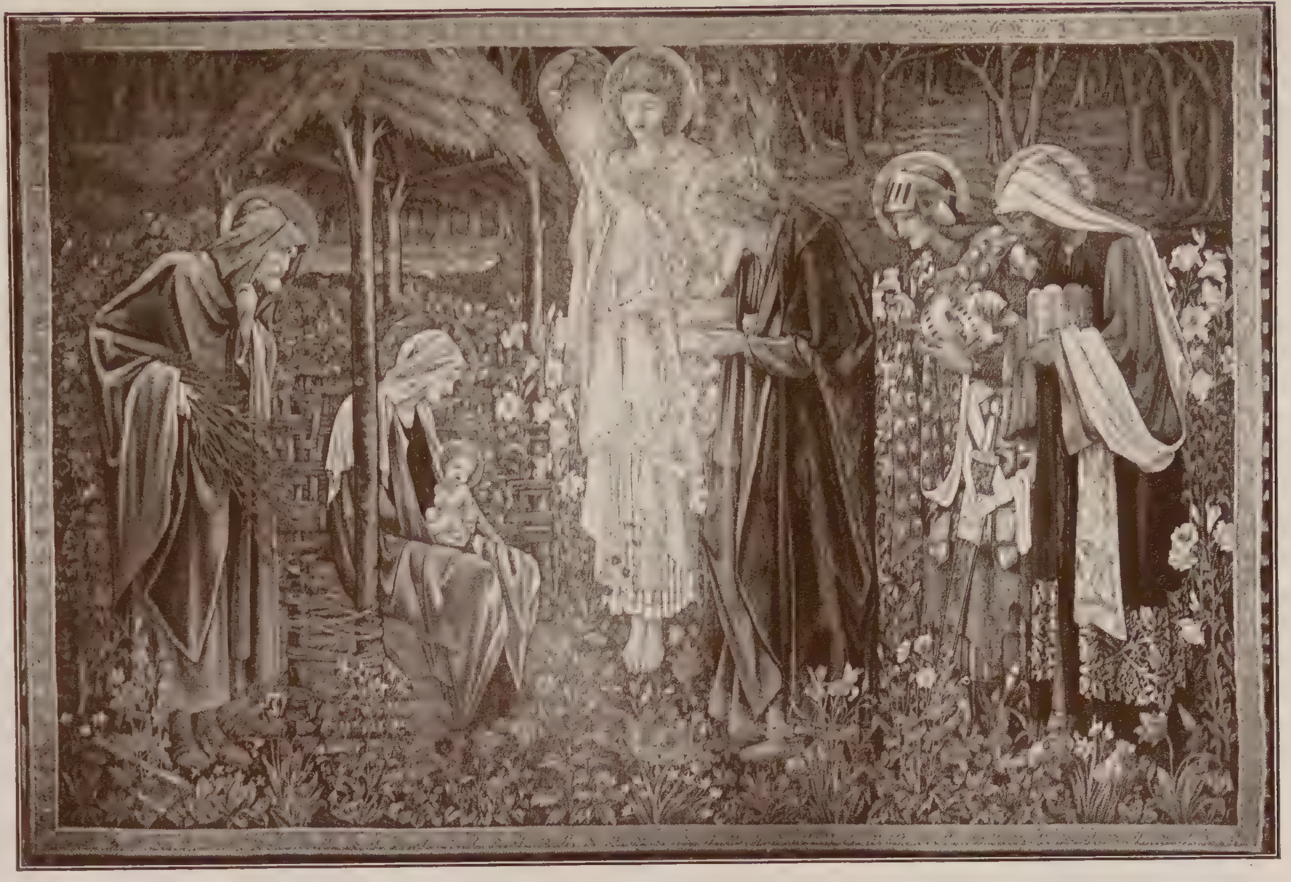
Modern cartoons are used, as we know, commanded for various public buildings in France, but the copying of old tapestries exercises a far happier influence on the weavers. If this is not an age of creation in art, at least it need not be an age of false gods, notwithstanding the seriousness given to distortions of the Matisse and post impressionist school.

A careful copying of old tapestries—and in this case old means those of the high periods of perfection—has led to a result from which much may be expected. This is the enormous reduction in the number of tones used. Gothic tapestries of stained glass effect had a restricted range of colour. By this brief gamut the weaver made his own gradations of colour, and the passage from light to shadow, by hatching, which was in effect but a weaving of alternating lines of two colours, much as an artist in pen-and-ink draws parallel lines for shading. Tapestries thus woven resist well the attacks of light and time.

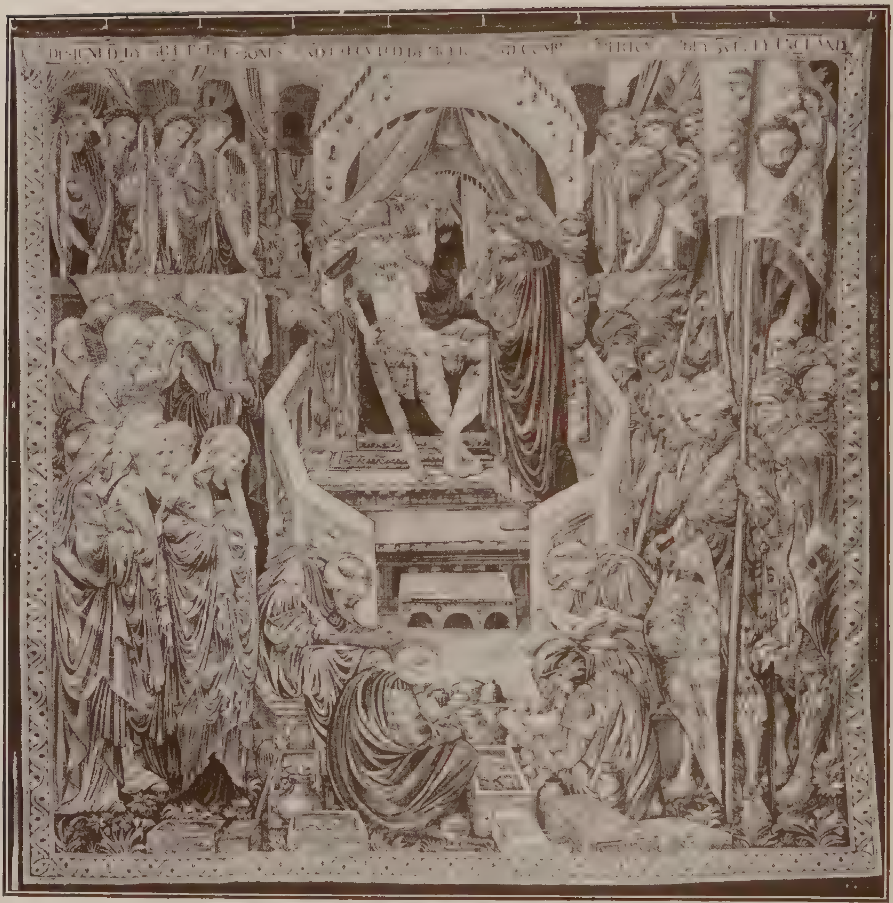
To sum up the present attitude of the Gobelins, then, is to say that the director of to-day encourages the education of taste in the weavers by encouraging them to copy old tapestries instead of paintings old or new, and in a reduction of the number of the tones employed. The talent of an artist is thus made necessary to the tapissier, for shadings are left to him to accomplish by his own skill instead of by recourse to the forty thousand shades that are stored on the shelves of the store-room.

The manufactory at Beauvais, being also under the State, is associated with the greater factory in the glance at modern conditions. Both factories weave primarily for the State. Both factories keep alive an ancient industry, and both have permission to sell their precious wares to the private client. That such sales are rarely made is due to the indifference of the State, which stipulates that its own work shall have first place on the looms, that only when a loom is idle may it be used for a private patron. The length of time, therefore, that must elapse before an order is executed—two or three years, perhaps—is a tiresome condition that very few will accept.

Beauvais, with its low-warp looms, is more celebrated for its small pieces of work than for large hangings. The tendency toward the latter ended some time ago, and in our time Beauvais makes mainly those exquisite cover-



THE ADORATION
Merton Abbey Tapestry. Figures by Burne-Jones



DAVID INSTRUCTING SOLOMON IN THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE
Merton Abbey Tapestry. Burne-Jones, Artist

ings for seats and screens that give the beholder a thrill of artistic joy and a determination to possess something similar. The models of Béhagle, Oudry, Charron are copied with fidelity to their loveliness, and it is these that after a few years of wear on furniture take on that mellowness which long association with human hands alone can give. It is scarcely necessary to say that antique furniture tapestry is rare; its use has been too hard to withstand the years. Therefore, we may with joy and the complacency of good taste acquire new coverings of the Don Quixote or Æsop's Fables designs for our latter-day furniture or for the fine old pieces from which the original tapestries have vanished.

ENGLAND

The chapter on Mortlake looms shows what was accomplished by deliberate importation of an art coveted but not indigenous. It is interesting to compare this with England's entirely modern and self-made craft of the last thirty years. I allude to the tapestry factory established by William Morris and called Merton Abbey. Mr. Morris preferred the word arras as attached to his weavings, tapestry having sometimes the odious modern meaning of machine-made figured stuffs for any sort of furniture covering. But as Arras did not invent the high-warp hand-loom, nor did the Saracens, nor the Egyptians, it is but quibbling to give it arbitrarily the name of any particular locale.

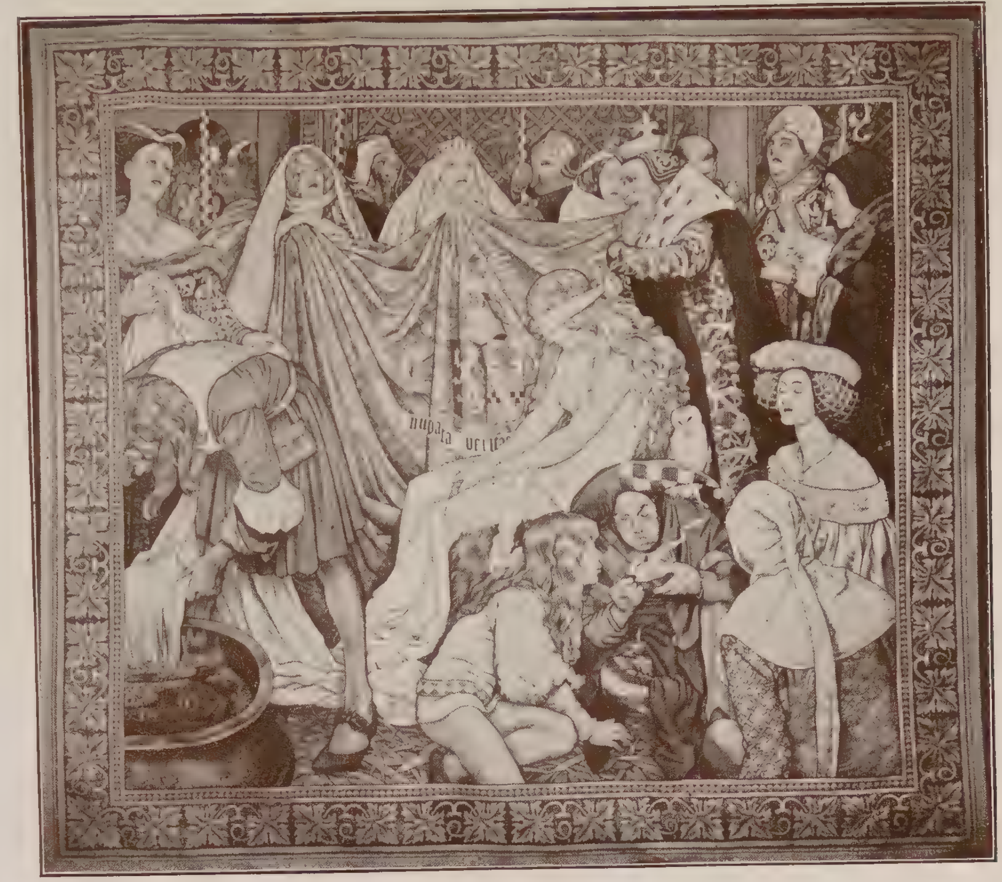
It seems that enough can never be said about the versatility of William Morris and the strong flood of beauty in design that he sent rippling over arid ground. It were enough had he accomplished only the work in tapestry. It is not too strong a statement that he produced at Merton Abbey the only modern tapestries that fill the primary requirements of tapestries.

How did he happen upon it in these latter days? By worshipping the old hangings of the Gothic perfection, by finding the very soul of them, of their designers and of their craftsmen; then, letting that soul enter his, he set his fingers reverently to work to learn, as well, the secret of the ancient workman.

It was as early as 1885 that he began; was cartoonist, dyer, tapissier, all, for the experiment, which was a small square of verdure after the manner of the Gothic, curling big acanthus leaves about a softened rose, a mingling of greens of ocean and shady reds. Perhaps it was no great matter in the way of tapestry, but it was to Morris like the discovery of a new continent to the navigator.

His was the time of a so-called æsthetic school in England. Watts, Rossetti and Burne-Jones were harking back to antiquity for inspiration. Morris associated with him the latter, who drew wondrous figures of maids and men and angels, figures filled with the devout spirit of the time when religion was paramount, and perfect with the art of to-day.

The romance of *The Holy Grail* gave happy theme for the work, and three beautiful tapestries made the set. *The Adoration of the Magi* was another, made for Exeter College, Oxford. Sir Edward Burne-Jones designed all these wondrous pictures, and the wisdom of Morris



TRUTH BLINDFOLDED
Merton Abbey Tapestry. Byram Shaw, Artist

decreed that the *Grail* series should not be oft repeated. The first figure tapestry woven on the looms was a fancy drawn by Walter Crane, called *The Goose Girl.*

The most enchantingly mediæval and most modernly perfect piece is by Burne-Jones, called *David Instructing Solomon in the Building of the Temple.* (Plate facing page 257.) In this the time of Gothic beauty lives again. Planes are repeated, figures are massed, detail is clear and impressive, yet modern laws of drawing concentrate the interest on the central action as strongly as though all else were subservient.

The Passing of Venus was Burne-Jones' last cartoon for Merton Abbey looms. (Plate facing page 260.) Although a critique of the art of this great painter would be out of place in a book on the applied arts, at least it is allowable to express the conviction that more beautiful, more fitting designs for tapestry it would be difficult to imagine. Modern work of this sort has produced nothing that approaches them, preserving as they do the sincerity and reverence of a simple people, the ideality of a conscientious age, yet softening all technical faults with modern finish. An unhappy fact is that this tapestry, which was considered by the Merton Abbey works as its *chef d'œuvre,* was destroyed by fire in the Brussels Exhibition of 1910.

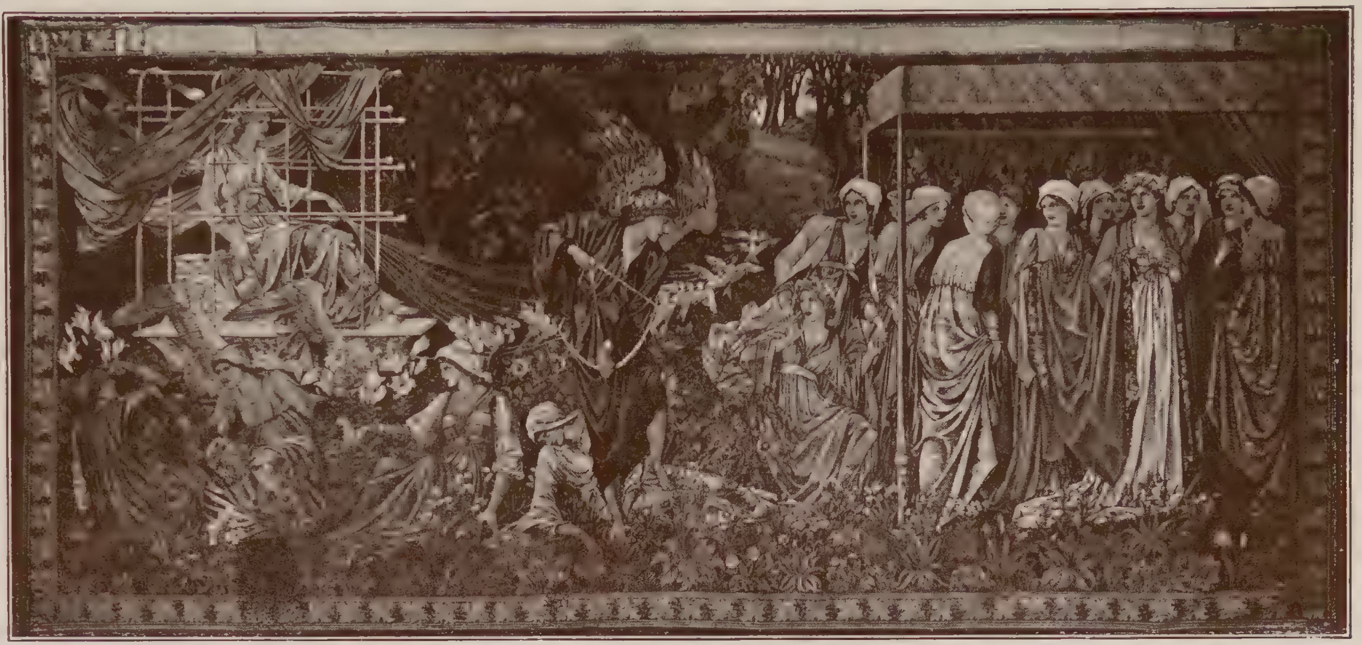
Alas for tapestry weaving of to-day, the usual modern cartoon is a staring anachronism, and a conglomerate of modes. An "art nouveau" lady poses in a Gothic setting, a Thayer angel stands in a Boucher entourage, and both eye and intelligence are revolted. The master craftsman and artist, William Morris, alone has known how to produce acceptable modern work from modern cartoons. Other examples are *Angeli Laudantes,* and *The Adoration.* (Plates facing pages 261 and 256.)

A false note is sometimes struck, even in this factory of wondrous taste. In *Truth Blindfolded* (plate facing page 258), Mr. Byram Shaw has drawn the central figure as Cabanel might have done a decade ago, while every other figure in the group might have been done by some hand dead these four hundred years.

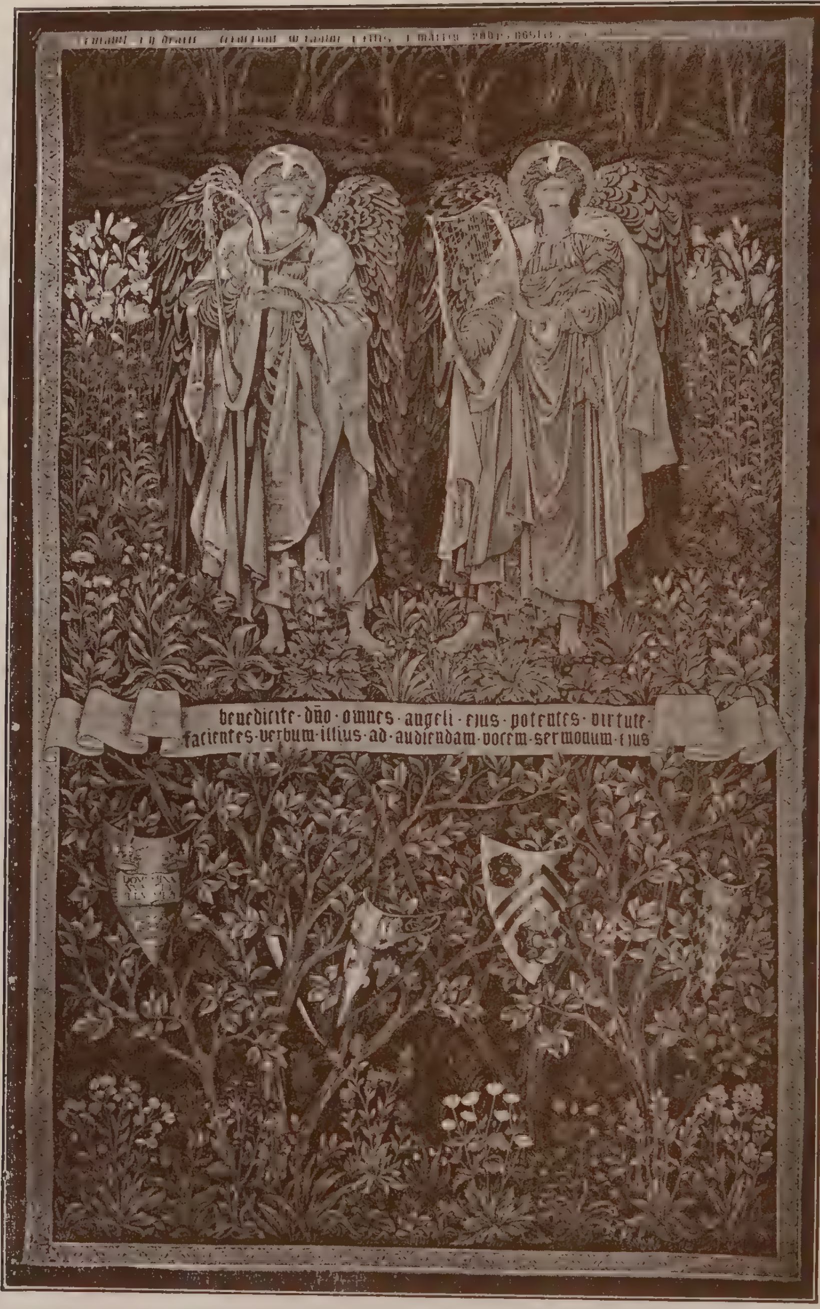
Morris' manner of procedure differed little from that of the decorator Lebrun, although his work was a private enterprise and in no way to be compared with the royal factory of a rich king. Burne-Jones drew the figures; H. Dearle, a pupil, and Philip Webb drew backgrounds and animals, but Morris held in his own hands the arrangement of all. It was as though a gardener brought in a sheaf of cut roses and the master hand arranged them. Mr. Dearle directed some compositions with skill and talent.

With the passing of William Morris an inevitable change is visible in the cartoons. The Gothic note is not continued, nor the atmosphere of sanctity, which is its usual accompaniment. A tapestry of 1908 from the design of *The Chace* by Heyward Sumner suggests long hours with the Flemish landscapists of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, with a jarring note of Pan dragged in by the ears to huddle under foliage obviously introduced for this purpose.

But criticism of this aberration cannot hurt the won-



THE PASSING OF VENUS
Merton Abbey Tapestry. Cartoon by Burne-Jones


benedicite · dño · omnes · angeli · ejus · potentes · virtute
facientes · verbum · illius · ad · audiendam · vocem · sermonum · ejus

ANGELI LAUDANTES
Merton Abbey Tapestry

drous inspired work directed by Morris, and which it were well for a beauty-loving world to have often repeated. Unhappily, the Merton Abbey works are bound not to repeat the superb series of the *Grail.* The entire set has been woven twice, and three pieces of it a third time—and there it ends. This is well for the value of the tapestries, but is it not a providence too thrifty when the public is considered? In ages to come, perhaps, other looms will repeat, and our times will glow with the fame thereof.

Before leaving the subject of the Merton Abbey tapestries, it is interesting to note a technical change in the weaving. By intertwisting the threads of the chain or warp at the back, a way is found to avoid the slits in weaving that are left to be sewn together with the needle in all old work. This method has been proved the stronger of the two. The strain of hanging proves too great for the strength of the stitches, and on many a tapestry appear gaping wounds which call for yet more stitching. But in the new method the fabric leaves the loom intact.

The determination of William Morris to catch old secrets by fitting his feet into old footsteps, led him to employ only the loom of the best weavers in the ancient long ago. The high-warp loom is the only one in use at the Merton Abbey works.

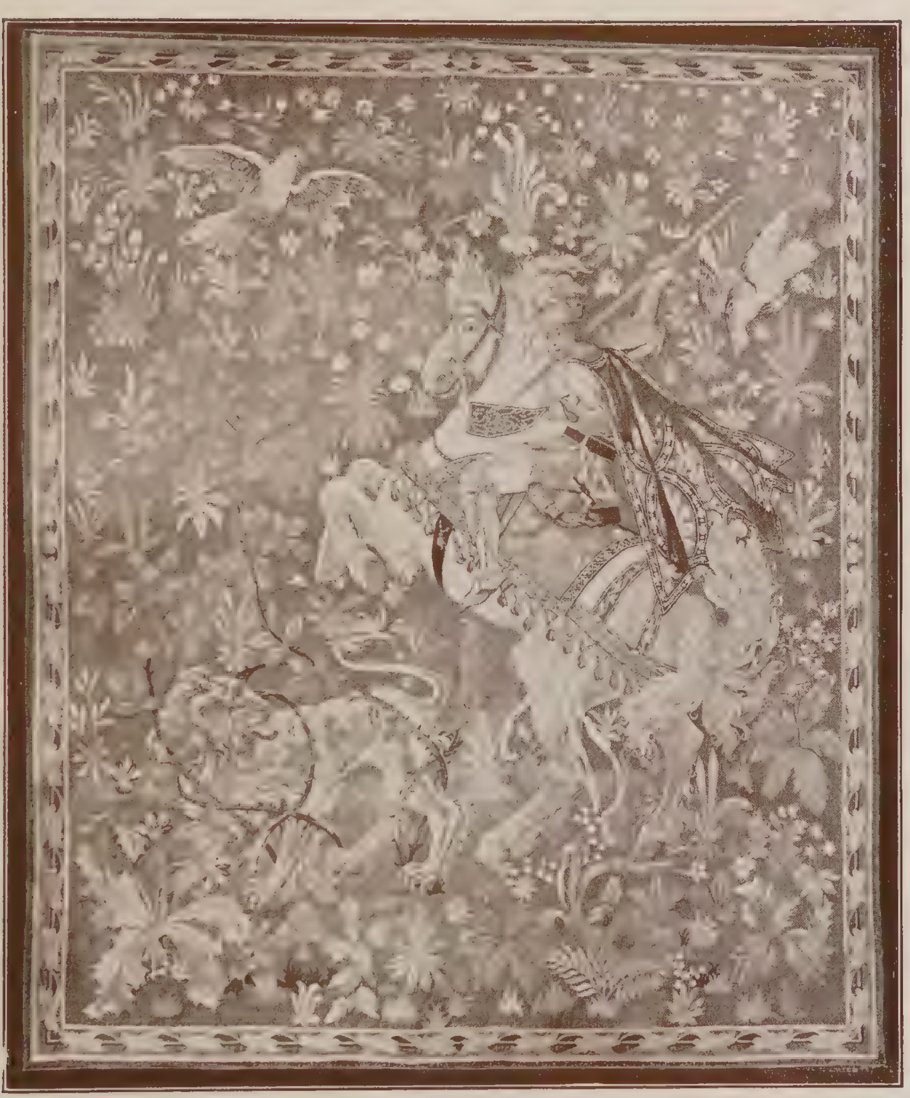
AMERICA

America makes heavy demands for tapestries, but the art of producing them is not indigenous here. We are not without looms, however. The first piece of tapestry woven in America—to please the ethnologist we will grant that it was woven by Zuñi or Toltec or other aborigine. But the fabric approaching that of Arras or Gobelins, was woven in New York, in 1893, in the looms of the late William Baumgarten. It is preserved as a curiosity, as being the first. It is a chair seat woven after the designs popular with Louis XV and his court, a plain background of solid colour on which is thrown a floral ornament.

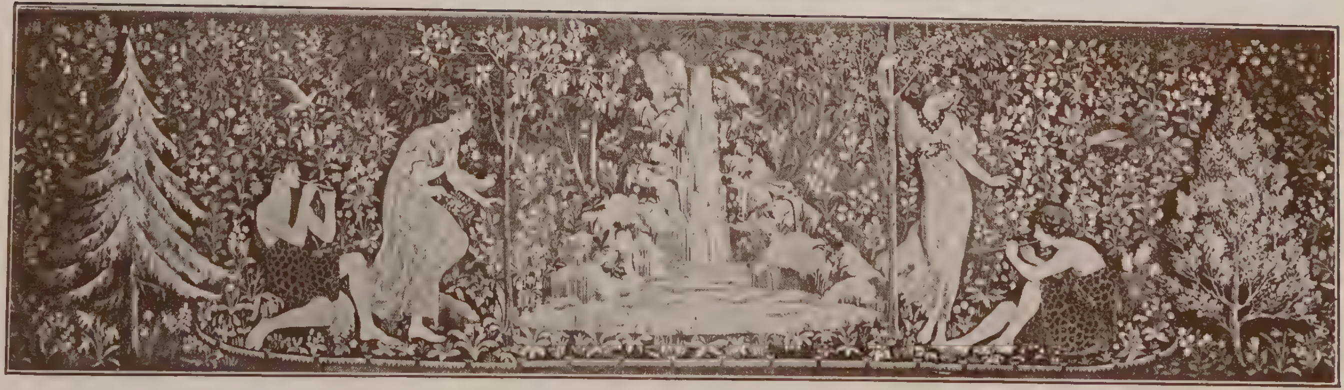
The loom was a small affair of the low-warp type, and was operated by a Frenchman who came to this country for the purpose of starting the craft on new soil.

The sequence to this small beginning was the establishment of tapestry ateliers at Williamsbridge, a suburb of New York. Like the Gobelins factory, this was located in an old building on the banks of a little stream, the Bronx. Workmen were imported, some from Aubusson, who knew the craft; these took apprentices, as of old, and trained them for the work. The looms were all of the low-warp pattern.

It may be of interest to those who like figures, to know that the work of the Baumgarten atelier averages in price about sixty dollars a square yard. Perhaps this will help a little in deciding whether or not the price is reasonable when a dealer seductively spreads his ancient wares. Modern cartoons of the Baumgarten factory lack the charm of the old designs, but the adaptations and copies of ancient pieces are particularly happy. No better execution could be wished for. The factory has increased its looms to the number of twenty-two, and has its regular



AMERICAN (BAUMGARTEN) TAPESTRY COPIED FROM THE GOTHIC



DRYADS AND FAUNS
From Herter Looms, New York, 1910

corps of tapissiers, dyers, repairers, etc. Nowhere is the life of the weaver so nearly like that of his prototype in the golden age of tapestry. The colony on the Bronx is like a bit of old Europe set intact on American soil.

It is odd that New York should have more tapestry looms at work than has Paris. The Baumgarten looms exceed in number the present Gobelins, and the Herter looms add many more. The ateliers of Albert Herter are in the busiest part of New York, and here are woven by hand many fabrics of varying degrees of excellence. It is not Mr. Herter's intention to produce only fine wall hangings, but to supply as well floor coverings "a la façon de Perse," as the ancient documents had it, and to make it possible for persons of taste, but not necessarily fortune, to have hand-woven portières of artistic value.

Apart from this commendable aim, the Herter looms are also given to making copies of the antique in the finest of weaving, and to producing certain original pieces expressing the decorative spirit of our day. Besides this, the work is distinguished by certain combinations of antique and modern style that confuse the seeker after purity of style. That the effect is pleasing must be acknowledged as illustrated in the plate showing a tapestry for the country house of Mrs. E. H. Harriman. (Plate facing page 263.) It is not easy in a review of tapestry weaving of to-day to find any great encouragement.

These are times of commerce more than of art. If art can be made profitable commercially, well and good. If not, it starves in a garret along with the artist. If the demand for modern tapestries was large enough, the art would flourish—perhaps. But it is not a large demand, for many reasons, chief among which is the incontrovertible one that the modern work is seldom pleasing. The whole world is occupied with science and commerce, and art does not create under their influence as in more ideal times. What can the trained eye and the cultivated taste do other than turn back to the products of other days?

We have artists in our own country whose qualities would make of them marvellous composers of cartoons. The imagination and execution of Maxfield Parrish, for example, added to his richness of colouring, would be translatable in wool under the hands of an artist-weaver. And the designs which take the name of "poster" and are characterised by strength, simplicity and few tones, why would they not give the same crispness of detail that constitutes one of the charms of Gothic work? Perhaps the factories existent in America will work out this line of thought, combine it with honesty of material and labour, and give us the honour of prominence in an ancient art's revival.

FINIS

BEST PERIODS AND THEIR DATES

Earliest Tapestry Looms	Prehistoric
European Early Attempts	Twelfth to Fourteenth Centuries
Arras and Burgundian Tapestry	Early Fifteenth Century
Gothic Perfection, Flanders	About Fifteen Hundred
Gothic Perfection, France	About Fifteen Hundred
Italian Factories	Fifteenth Century
Raphael Cartoons in Flanders	1515–1519
Renaissance Perfection, Flanders	1515 to Second Half of Century
Brussels Mark	1528
Flemish Decadence	End of Sixteenth Century
French Rise	End of Sixteenth Century
French Organization	1597, Reign of Henri IV
English Supremacy, Mortlake Established	1619
Establishment of Gobelins	1662, Reign of Louis XIV
Best Heroic Period of Gobelins	Last Half of Seventeenth Century
Best Decorative Period of Gobelins	Middle of Eighteenth Century
Decadence of Gobelins	End of Eighteenth Century
Recent Times, England, Wm. Morris	End of Nineteenth Century
Recent Times, America	End of Nineteenth Century

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